

BILL J. ALLEN
Pulitzer

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

LOOPHOLS KEEP THEM SAFE FROM THEIR...

Tax increases

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL has an interesting question for Sen. John Kerry and John Edwards on their fervor for tax increases:

"How much of those tax increases will actually hit the super-rich like yourselves, and how much will end up on the backs of upper middle-class wage earners?"

The newspaper takes a detailed look at the tax-paying histories of the two Democrats and notes that they have taken advantage of every tax loophole available to them.

"Of course, nobody is obligated to pay more than what the letter of the law requires," the journal notes. "But the complex tax code benefits the wealthy, who can afford tax attorneys and complicated schemes to skirt the law."

The newspaper's closing zinger was "Mr. Edwards is right that there really are two Americas. The people who work for their money and want to keep more of their own paychecks. And wealthy politicians who want to raise taxes on the middle class secure in the knowledge that they won't have to pay."

More captives

THE GOVERNMENT of the Philippines certainly got a terrorist threat to one of its truck drivers.

The Iraqi terrorists were so pleased with their success in that case that they seized six more foreign nationals and threatened to behead one every 72 hours unless their employers shut down their operations in Iraq.

The lucky Filipino captive was freed after his government brought home the nation's small contingent of troops a month early to please the terrorists.

But a day later three Indians, two Kenyans and an Egyptian — all truck drivers working on Iraqi reconstruction — were kidnapped and the threats of murder were announced.

Their nations have not contributed troops to the Iraqi effort, but the Iraqi prime minister recently asked India and Egypt to send military forces to help out.

It's nice that the Philippines got their man back. Too bad that in doing so they may have caused the kidnapping of six more, though that was entirely predictable.

Politics has become a blood sport

By TOM BRENNAN

Politics has become much more of a blood sport than it was the last time I covered a real election campaign. That was back in 1962 when Ted Kennedy was running for the U.S. Senate in Massachusetts.

It was five years before I took my first job with The Anchorage Times and moved to Alaska. I was then a reporter for The Worcester (Mass.) Telegram.

Ted was running for the seat left vacant when his brother Jack won the presidency. Ted was only 28 when Jack moved into the White House, too young to run for the Senate, so the governor appointed a friend of the Kennedy family to keep the seat warm until Jack's younger brother turned 30.

Teddy had no political experience, he was an assistant district attorney in Boston with no statewide visibility. His opponent was Edward J. McCormack Jr., the state's attorney general and a member of an old Massachusetts political family, a man who would have walked into the Senate seat if he weren't running against the popular president's brother.



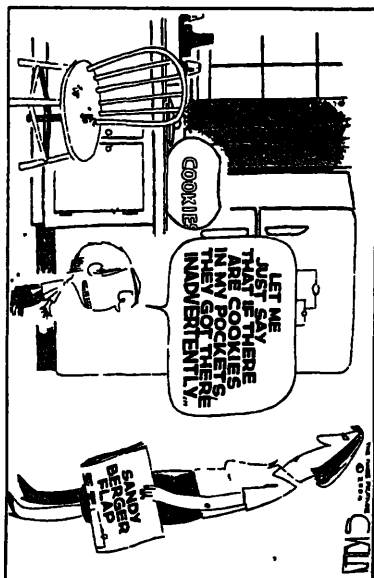
McCormack's Brennan

most cutting remark during the campaign was "If your name was Edward Moore instead of Edward Moore Kennedy, you wouldn't stand a chance in this race." (I'm dredging the line up from a dim memory, but I'm sure the words are pretty close.)

The crack was very much the truth and drew a knowing laugh from most people. It was a little embarrassing to Teddy, but didn't slow him down at all.

Massachusetts was big on political rallies in those days and Kennedy would go unashamedly into the Irish meeting halls, run on stage and sing "Till I take you home again, Kathleen." The play you know again, Kathleen. The play seemed exploitive to me, a cause for nausea and a throwback to much earlier days, but the crowd loved it.

Ted Kennedy won the race, of course, and has been the Senate's leading liberal.



al pretty much ever since. (It's only in recent years that he became the resident curmudgeon liberal. He earned the curmudgeon title over time.)

Politics has been a burning sport at times off and on through history, but in the early 1960s it was a gentleman's game and the jousting was fairly civil. By contrast, the negativity and nastiness in many of today's election campaigns — and the vicious e-mails, letters and phone calls that pass back and forth — makes me long for what now seems like the good old days.

The rude tone of the current presidential campaign, especially on the part of the Democrats who want George Bush out of the White House, is especially offensive. According to his advertising, John Kerry's greatest merit seems to be that he is not President Bush.

The president has been in office at a very difficult time. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the resulting war on terrorism have riled many people on both sides of the argument. I come down on the president's side and think Kerry would be a terrible choice for the White House. How many people agree with me?

One thing I hate about the current election is that opposition to the struggle in Iraq has brought out the worst in many of our fellow Americans. Too many, because

of their anger and political leanings, are not supporting the men and women who are bearing the brunt of the fighting. They denounce the Iraq struggle, taking their head from John Kerry, a man who fought bravely in Vietnam and parlayed three minor injuries into a trip home that made a show of throwing the medals ribbons over the Capitol fence and accused his fellow soldiers of atrocities.

During World War II and Korea, most of the folks on the home front behaved in ways of which they could be proud. That wasn't much true during the Vietnam conflict and we are seeing the worst of some of our fellow citizens again during the war on terrorism. Perhaps the nation's values have changed. If so, it's a change for the worse.

OOOPS — In last week's column I used incorrect exchange rates for Canadian and American dollars. So if you have a copy of the column pasted to your refrigerator, or if your spouse is still muttering and clutching last Friday's paper in his or her fist, please remove it gently and parcel in the following corrections: \$21 billion Canadian should be \$16 billion in U.S. currency and \$74 billion (U.S.) should be \$43 billion.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday, July 22, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

FIRE CREWS GET TO SEE . . .

Old friends

SMOKEJUMPERS and their colleagues from across the nation are battling hot wildfires on the job here this summer and enjoying warm reunions with old friends during their occasional rest breaks.

About 1,500 specialists from 25 states are working with 1,200 fire-trained Alaskans for what is shaping up as one of the worst fire seasons in history here. Their numbers include those in specialties like smokejumping, hotshots, hand crews and many others.

The smokejumpers generally parachute into remote blazes. Hotshots are also highly trained and conditioned, they often travel by truck or helicopter, then walk miles through the woods and across burlap. Hand crews are skilled at racing ahead of fires to evacuate threatened residents, then they dig in and remove fuels around homes and buildings before the fire closes in.

All of these people risk their lives and work under often miserable conditions, but most say they enjoy their jobs and the camaraderie of the crews.

And when many crews are assigned to large projects like the huge blazes now raging through Alaska's Dry Interior, the workers tend to encounter old friends from past fires. That gives them a welcome chance to get reacquainted and swap stories of forest battles past and present.

The fire crews are hoping the Alaska weather cooperates and that they can leave soon. Not because they will get to go home and rest, the fire season is beginning in the Lower 48 and the wildfire fighters have yet more challenges ahead before they can hang up their equipment for the year.

Tony stoops low

LET'S SEE, wasn't it just a few weeks ago that candidate Tony Knowles proudly proclaimed that he would not use negative advertising in his campaign for the U.S. Senate? In the process, of course, he accused his opponent, Sen. Lisa Murkowski, of using a negative ad against him.

So much for Tony's high road. He has stepped into the gutter by running on television one of the most vicious attack ads ever seen in Alaska political campaigning.

It assaults Sen. Murkowski's positions on a number of issues, which is fair enough — but it depicts her personally as a truly repulsive looking woman through the use of quick-action close-up facial shots pasted together to make her seem ugly and downright mean.

It's not an issue-oriented ad so much as it is an offensive personal attack of the worst kind.

No negative campaigning, Mr. Democratic candidate?

Thus despicable TV spot tells us more about Tony than it does about Lisa.

Disgraceful fiction of painful events

By MICHAEL NEWODOWSKI

"From Here to Eternity," "Tora, Tora, Tora," "In Harm's Way." These are three films made about Pearl Harbor. There have been more than 20 films made about Pearl Harbor, and over 200 films made about World War II. These films inspire patriotism, courage, and nationalism.

They tell us about the honor and bravery of the soldiers and the nation that supported them. Two and a half years after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the world watched American forces fight on D-Day. Two and a half years after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the world is watching Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Moore's film is the first major motion picture about Sept. 11, 2001. This bears repeating. When future generations look back on the Sept. 11 massacre, their first impression, through the medium of film, will be a work in which the president and the government are blamed for the attacks, and the soldiers who are protecting this country are demeaned.

Instead of a film version of Lisa Beamer's book, "Last Man Down," we are presented with this fallacy. How could this happen?

It would be a colossal insult to unsuicide that Franklin D. Roosevelt or the U.S. government were in any way responsible for the attacks on Pearl Harbor. Can you imagine the indignation of the man and woman who lived during that period?

"Fahrenheit 9/11" is indicative of a nation that has become too speechless, a nation or devoted to face the enemy at the gate America, where is your fury?

On Sept. 11, 2001, I stood across the Hudson River, watching the Twin Towers burn, knowing that if the plane had struck at 9:46 a.m. instead of 8:46 a.m., I would be dead. As a survivor and witness to the attack, on the World Trade Center, I am more than insulted by this film. I am outraged.

This film is based on conjecture, hearsay and propaganda. At a time when this country desperately needs to rally in support of our brave soldiers and our strong leaders, Moore is content to spread discord and divisiveness. The



base of his argument is that the Bush administration had strong ties with the bin Laden family. However, sound facts are conspicuously absent from this "documentary."

The 9/11 commission did not report, and the president's actions before, during, and after the attacks are fully justified, including the military action in Iraq.

The commission did not find a direct link between Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. A similar commission in the 1940s would not have found a direct link between Hitler's Germany and the attack on Pearl Harbor. In both instances, the threat was imminent, the president and the military acted decisively.

Could we have been more prepared for a terrorist attack on Sept. 10, 2001? Certainly. Could we have been more prepared for an attack on Dec. 6, 1941? Most definitely. In the weeks and months following Pearl Harbor, there were reports and criticisms that the government and military should have been more prepared.

The difference is that the people of the nation did not waste a lot of time pointing fingers at each other. Rather, they unified and engaged the enemy head-on. I guess that is why we call

them "The Greatest Generation." How will future generations refer to us? So, how do we explain Moore's film to future generations? I wonder. More than that, I wonder how I would explain this film to Nancy D., Jerome N. or Heather H. I am sure you don't know their names, but their faces haunt me day and night.

How would I explain to them that a film was made accusing the senior president and soldiers who are attempting to avenge their murders and protect other citizens. Moore has not only insulted the nation, he has insulted the victims of the terrorist attacks.

During his acceptance speech at the Oscars, Moore said, "Shame on you, Mr. Bush." Well, I say, "Shame on you, Michael Moore." Shame on everyone who supports this travesty of a film. Shame on a society that allows this abhor of a film. You have weakened the nation.

Michael Newodowski was a chef at the Windows on the World restaurant at the World Trade Center until Sept. 11, 2001. He lives in Bradenton, FL. This column was first published by the Sarasota Herald-Tribune and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

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Wednesday, July 21, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

JUST LIKE ALASKA'S...

Old primary

DOWN IN SEATTLE, election officials are designing new ballots for use in the state's September primary election.

And at least for King County, which embraces Seattle, the decision has been made. Its ballots will look just like Alaska's ones did.

County election officials mixed the idea of separate ballots for Democrats, Republicans, and Libertarians.

Instead, voters will be handed a single ballot containing the names of all the candidates — but voters won't be allowed to holler-skoller cherry-pick from the list. In other words, no cross-over voting. Pick the Republicans. Pick the Democrats. Pick the Libertarians.

But don't pick one party's candidate here and another party's candidate there.

VOTERS WILL declare their particular party preference at the top of the ballot, and then must stick with casting their ballots only for candidates seeking nomination under the appropriate banner. Any vote cast outside the chosen party preference won't be counted.

No record will be kept, election official said, of a voter's party preference.

The state's new primary ballots are the result of a ruling by a federal appeals court that declared unconstitutional Washington's 70-year-old so-called blanket primary.

Other counties in the state are designing other plans for the primary, including issuing separate ballots because they lack the vote-counting technology to deal with the King County system.

At one point in Alaska's colorful past, voters have had the same deal — a single ballot, with the names of all the candidates listed, and with the admonition there could be no cross-over voting.

But that was a change, too. Back in the good old days — and even more recently than that, as a matter of fact — Alaskans could vote for candidates from different parties in the primary election. Not so now.

And considering that the purpose of a primary election is to enable political parties to choose their candidates who will run in the general election, it's probably a very good thing.

King County voters should do just fine

Obesity isn't a public health issue

By DAVID BOAZ

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson says, "Obesity is a critical public health problem in our country."

Wrong. Obesity is a problem for many people, but it is not a public health problem. By calling it one, however, Thompson can promise that we, the taxpayers, will pay for everyone's diet programs, stomach surgery, and behavioral counseling. Get out your wallet.

The meaning of "public health" has spruikled out lately over the decades. Once, it referred to the project of securing health benefits that were public: clean water, improved sanitation, and the control of epidemics through treatment, quarantine, and immunization.

Public health officials worked to drain swamps that might breed mosquitoes and thus spread malaria. They strove to ensure that water supplies were not contaminated with cholera, typhoid, or other diseases. The U.S. Public Health Service began as the Marine Hospital Service, and one of its primary functions was ensuring that sailors didn't expose domestic populations to new and virulent illnesses from overseas.

Those were legitimate public health issues because they involved consumption of a collective good (air or water) and/or the communication of disease to parties who had not consented to put themselves at risk. It is difficult for individuals to protect themselves against illnesses found in air, water, or food. A breeding ground for disease-carrying insects poses a risk to entire communities.

Plenty of people in Africa and Asia still need these basic public health measures.

As Jerry Taylor writes in *Republicanism*, "Diseases associated with inadequate sanitation, indoor air pollution from biomass stoves and furnaces, and contaminated water occur mainly in developing countries and account for 30 percent of the total burden of disease in those nations. Diarrheal diseases, brought on by poor sanitation



"You'd better hurry up and decide. The warranty runs out in 15 minutes."

and contaminated water, alone kill more than three million children annually, and experts believe that two million of those deaths could easily be prevented with even minimal improvements in sanitation and water quality. Approximately seven million die each year from conditions like tuberculosis, cholera, typhoid, and hookworm that could be just as easily prevented and cured and are virtually unknown as serious health problems in advanced countries.

In the United States and other developed countries, those public health problems have been largely solved. For instance, in the 1920s there were 13,000-15,000 reported cases of diphtheria each year in the United States. Only one case was reported each year in 1998, 1999, and 2000. Before 1963, there were about 500,000 cases of measles and 800 measles deaths reported each year. A record low annual total of 86 cases was reported in 2000. The last case of smallpox on earth occurred in an outbreak of two cases (one of which was fatal) in Birmingham, England, in 1978, almost 30 years after the last case in the United States.

But bureaucracies are notoriously unwilling to become victims of their own success. So, true to form, the public health authorities broadened their mandate and kept on going. They launched informational and regulatory crusades against such health problems as smoking, venereal disease, AIDS, and obesity.

Pick up any newspaper and you're apt to find a story about these "public health crises." These are all health problems, to be sure, but are they really public health problems?

There's an easy, perfectly private way to avoid increased risk of lung cancer and heart disease. Don't smoke. You don't need any collective action for that. Want to avoid AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases? Don't have sex, or use condoms. (The threat to the blood supply did have public health aspects and was dealt with promptly.) As for obesity, it doesn't take a village for me to eat less and exercise more.

Language matters. Calling something a "public health problem" suggests that it is different from a personal health problem in ways that demand collective action. And while it doesn't strictly follow, either in principle or historically, that "collective action" must be state action, that distinction is easily elided in the face of a "public health crisis."

If smoking and obesity are called public health problems, then it seems that we need a public health bureaucracy to solve them — and the Public Health Service and all its sister agencies don't get to close up shop with the satisfaction of a job well done. So let's start using honest language. Smoking and obesity are health problems. In fact, they are widespread health problems. But they are not public health problems.

Secretary Thompson should not require the taxpayers to pay for national behavioral choices. But maybe if our taxes go up enough, we won't be able to afford to oversize.

David Boaz is executive vice president of the Cato Institute and author of *Libertarianism A Primer*.

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TIME FOR SEATTLE TO . . .

Return favor

YOU'D THINK THAT the Seattle business and political community would be eager to support Alaska on the big natural resource issues this state faces in trying to keep the economy growing. Not so, unfortunately — and not for a long time.

Seattle, said to say, all too often wants to take more than it gives. Take, for one example, the long struggle Alaska has had to win congressional support for the opening of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil and gas exploration.

The Puget Sound area — and all of Washington state, for that matter — would reap huge profits were that area opened for drilling. The Port of Seattle and Seattle-Thomson International Airport would be launching pads for tons of shipments north, and Seattle vendors would be among the many suppliers of goods and material needed for North Slope expansion.

Yet Washington's senators and most of its congressional delegation are opposed to ANWR, their campaign accounts relying on dollars from the environmental lobbies opposed to ANWR.

AND SEATTLE'S two daily newspapers, the Times and the Post-Intelligencer — rail against ANWR on a regular basis, in editorials and through editorial cartoons that lambaste the project. The two newspapers are at war with each other — in a bitter court battle involving the joint operating agreement under which the Times handles the printing, circulation and advertising activities of the P-I. But they stand together against Alaska on this issue.

At the same time, however, they hail the expansion of the cruise ship industry in Seattle, which is booming because the record numbers of tourists are heading north on luxury journeys to Alaska.

A year ago, in fact, the Port of Seattle opened a second cruise-ship terminal — to meet demands after federal legal barriers were dropped and Vancouver, B.C., didn't become the sole jumping-off place for Alaska cruising.

So guess what? The port has under consideration the construction of a third terminal to accommodate even more cruise ships — and effectively reap more financial rewards from its off-repeated claim to being the Gateway to Alaska. The new proposal would be for a \$10 million-to-\$16 million terminal that would be able to handle four ships at one time. The reason is clear.

The Times says the number of sailings from Seattle to Alaska "has grown from a handful in 1989 to more than 150 this year. A record quarter-million passengers are expected to depart from Seattle" before this tourist season ends. Well, it's good that Alaska is helping with Seattle's economy. It's time for Seattle to return the favor.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

The Hague takes aim at Israel again

By CHARLES KAUTHAUAMER

Among various principles invoked by the International Court of Justice in its highly publicized decision on Israel's so-called "wall" is this one: It is a violation of international law for Jews to be living in the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem.

If this sounds absurd to you — Jews have been inhabiting the Old City of Jerusalem since it became their capital 3,000 years ago — it is. And it shows the lengths to which the United Nations and its associate institutions, including this kangaroo court, will go to condemn Israel.

The court's main business was to order Israel to tear down the security fence separating Israelis from Palestinians. The fence is only one-quarter built, and yet it has already resulted in an astonishing reduction in suicide attacks in Israel. In the past four months, two Israelis have died in suicide attacks, compared with 166 killed in the same time frame at the height of the terrorism.

But what are 164 dead Jews to this court? Israel finally finds a way to stop terrorism, and 14 innocents are killed. The Hague rules it illegal — in a 84-page opinion in which the word terrorism appears not once (except when citing Israeli claims).

Yes, the fence causes some hardship to Palestinians. Some are separated from their fields, some schoolchildren have to walk much farther to class. This is unfortunate. On any scale of human decency, however, it is far more unfortunate that 1,000 Israelis are dead from Palestinian terrorism, and thousands more horribly maimed, including Israeli schoolchildren with nails and bolts and shrapnel lodged in their brains and spines who will never be walking to school again.

From the safe distance of 2,000 miles, the court declared itself "not convinced" that the barrier Israel is building is a security necessity. It based its ruling on the claim that the fence violates Palestinian "humanitarian" rights such as the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living.

as proclaimed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



THE CONSIDERABLE PALESTINIAN

I'm sure these conventions are lovely documents. They are also documents of little weight — how many court cases would not stand condemned for failure to provide an adequate standard of living? — except, of course, when it comes to Israel. Then, any document at hand will do.

What makes the travesty complete is that this denial of Israel's right to defend itself because doing so might violate "humanitarian" rights was read in open court by the chief judge representing China, whose government massacred hundreds of its own citizens demonstrating peacefully in Tiananmen Square. Not since Libya was made chairman of the Commission on Human Rights has the UN system put on such a shameless display of hypocrisy.

Moreover, the court had no jurisdiction to take this case. It is a court of arbitration, which requires the consent of both parties. The Israelis, knowing the deck was stacked, refused to give it. Not only did the United States declare this issue outside the boundaries of this court, so did the European Union and Russia, hardly Zionist agents.

The court went ahead nonetheless, betraying its prejudice in its very decision. For example, throughout the opinion it refers to the barrier as a "wall." In fact, over 80 percent of its length consists of fences, troughs and electric devices to prevent terrorist infiltration. Less than one kilometer out of every 15 is a wall, and this is generally in areas

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Monday, July 19, 2004 **B-5**

KNOWLES' INFLUENCE IS ...

Unimpressive

YOU CAN ADD Democratic Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa to the lengthy list of those unimpressed and unwelcomed by U.S. Senate hopefuls. They knowles' call for Congress to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration. Harkin time and again has voted against legislation that would open ANWR's desolate coastal plain to strictly regulated oil exploration, and apparently that position is not going to change — despite his being a featured guest at a recent Knowles fund-raiser in Washington, D.C.

The Iowa senator "took advantage of the Fourth of July congressional recess to go on a rafting trip in Alaska with his wife, two daughters and a son-in-law," Jane Norman reported in the *Des Moines (Iowa) Register*. "Harkin said he's now more sure than ever that it would be wrong to drill for oil in the wilderness refuge there."

Knowles, a Democrat running against incumbent Lisa Murkowski, says he is all for opening ANWR. Sadly, he finds himself in the same political party as John F. Kerry and John Edwards. Both men, along with a host of other Democrats who put Alaska's interests dead last, have vowed to keep ANWR closed, no matter what.

The former governor likes to portray himself as an "independent" Democrat. But in our view that is just another way of saying he has little influence with his party, despite his hollow, photo-op calls for Congress to change its ways.

Win one for Lisa

THE LEFTISTS and the gay-rights folks have a new reason to bash Sen. Lisa Murkowski. But her vote to defend the institution of marriage — as a union between one man and one woman — will win her warm praise and a lot of votes in the coming primary and general elections.

Hollywood, John Kerry's Massachusetts courts and TV yakster Rosie O'Donnell, among others of a like mind, are ready to junk one of the world's most treasured values. Most Americans are not. Neither, we are confident, are most Alaskans — many of whom are appalled by this assault on the sacredness of family life.

Murkowski was one of 48 members of the Senate who voted the other day to move forward a proposal calling for a constitutional amendment that would deny legal status to same-sex marriages.

The measure failed, because it needed 60 votes to overcome a certain Democratic filibuster to kill the so-called Defense of Marriage Act.

That tells you a lot about what is wrong with the Senate these days. And it makes a strong statement about why we don't need even one more Democrat in the Senate.

Cosby's remarks confront problem

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Bill Cosby rattled the cages again a fortnight ago in his address before Jesse Jackson's 33rd Annual Rainbow/PUSH Coalition conference in Chicago. Let's look at some of his remarks.

Cosby told the audience that being poor had a different meaning to older generations and said the "thousand projects" set up for you to move in, move out and move out. "Cosby's family moved out of Philadelphia's Richard Allen housing project, and so did mine."

I don't know what Cosby's mother told him about being poor, but my mother frequently said, in the middle of one scolding or another, "We have a beer pocketbook but champagne tastes." One of my grandmother's favorite admonitions was "You don't have to be rich to be clean."

Yesterday's gross maternal poverty among blacks is all but gone. In all too many cases, it has been replaced by the worst kind of poverty — poverty of the spirit.

Bill Cosby also admonished blacks to stop blaming the white man for our problems. "This is a time, ladies and gentlemen," Cosby said, "when we have to turn the mirror around." He's right, Williams.

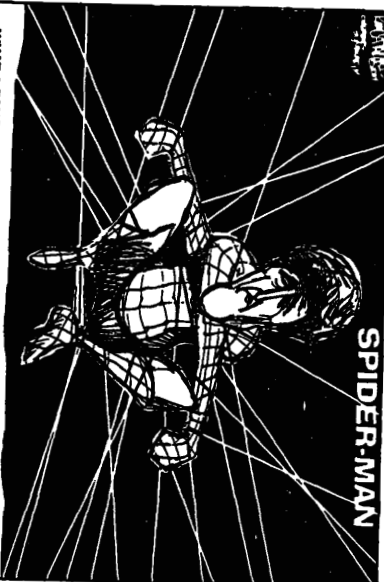


Nobody can sensibly argue that racial discrimination has altogether disappeared. The relevant question is how much of what we see can be explained by racial discrimination? The 70 percent illegitimacy rate among blacks is devastating, not to mention unprecedented, but can it be blamed on discrimination?

Is the white man responsible for today's all-time high number of black single-parent families? What about the crime rate that has turned many black neighborhoods, once stable and civilized, into battlegrounds and economic wastelands?

Cosby also talked about a pathology. Cosby also talked about a pathology.

WHAT A TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE WHEN FIRST WE FLIP-FLAP TO DECEIVE



SPIDER-MAN

cal culture that has emerged among many blacks referring to one another as "niggers" and music that refers to black women as "bitches" and "whores." Added to that pathology are the verbal and physical reprisals against blacks who speak and carry themselves properly and seek to excel academically.

I'd sure like to hear the argument for the case where hard work and academic excellence make one a race traitor — acting white.

What to do? Addressing Bill Cosby's critique is a long, challenging journey, but as with any journey, we're closer to its end by taking the first step, even if it's a small first step. When the fall semester begins, teachers should refuse to accept "I do," "Why you ain't?" and "Where you at?"

They might ask students who use such language whether they know any one who's successful and speaks that way, except Snoopy Doggy Dog. They might also refuse to accept poor education like "tax" for ask and "waff" for wait. Check it out with Cosby if you don't believe me. None of the Richard Allen kids he and I grew up with spoke that way.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

Sunday, July 18, 2004 F-3

DELAYING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ...

Invites trouble

THERE ARE THOSE in government who seem to believe the United States must be prepared to delay the November presidential election if terrorists strike to disrupt it, as they did in Spain in March just prior to elections there.

Newsweek reports the U.S. Election Assistance Commission has sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge pointing out that "the federal government has no agency that has the statutory authority to cancel and reschedule a federal election."

The head of the commission, DeForest B. Soares Jr., asked Ridge to seek emergency legislation that would allow his agency to make the decision on any such postponement, the news magazine reports.

Newsweek, quoting unnamed sources, says Ridge has asked the Justice Department to "analyze what legal steps would be needed" to allow postponement in the wake of an attack, and specifically asked for an evaluation of Soares' letter.

One can only hope that all of this is some sort of odd trial balloon that quickly will burst under public scrutiny.

DELAYING A presidential election, for almost any reason, is an atrociously bad idea, and one certainly not in this nation's best interest. Changing the law to allow postponement of a presidential election because of an attack only plays into the hands of the killers searching for any and every opportunity to harm America, here and around the world. Announcing that we are prepared to delay an election would be an invitation for them to do the unthinkable.

If they could cause one postponement, why not another, and another? Instead, there should be one, unified message for these murderous things. No matter what they do, the institutions of freedom will remain unaffected, that we will vote despite their concerted efforts, that we will not be deterred from our civic duty, that terrorists cannot, and will not rip our national fabric.

They should know we will vote. Period. It is inconceivable that we would entertain the idea of sending them any other message.

If this nation is to survive, we must go on with our day-to-day lives, our routine, despite the best efforts of extremist butchers. We must be resolute. We must be determined. We must not bow to their threats. We must not abandon, out of fear, those institutions that keep us free and the envy of the world.

To do less only hands a victory to our enemies, whose sole focus is the destruction of the United States and our way of life.

We can deny them that only by being strong.

It may be the biggest flag in all of Alaska

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

IN CASE YOU'VE been wondering, that gigantic Stars and Stripes that Joe Anilock raised in front of the Diamond Center mall in South Anchorage is 40 feet high and 60 feet wide. Don't know for sure, but the bet here is that there isn't a bigger one in Alaska, anywhere. And you don't raise a flag that large on just any little old pole. No, sir, the nation's Red, White and Blue flag at the Diamond Center flies from a pole that's 133 feet tall.

EVERY TIME YOU'RE out by Diamond Boulevard and the Old Seward Highway and see that huge American flag your spirits will be raised. Ah, but you'll probably find no joy in a reminder of just how rapidly summer is slipping away. Don't think it is? Well, be advised the Alaska State Fair at Palmer opens its annual run in just six weeks — and that's always a signal that fall is at hand. The dates for this year's fair and carnivals: Aug. 27 through Sept. 6.



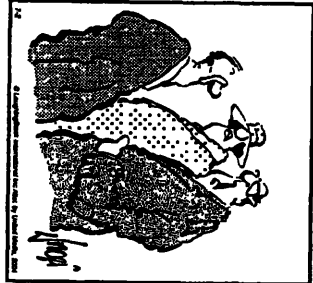
Tobin

BUT BEFORE it's time to harvest your crops, make plans to head to Girdwood in four weeks for the Alyeska Blueberry and Mountain Arts Festival. The Aug. 14 festivities will include the Alyeska Mountain Run, with more than 300 strong-legged types expected to tackle the steep slopes. Some will do anything to enjoy mid-August in Alaska.

OF MORE IMMEDIATE concern, however, is the upcoming Seward Silver Salmon Derby. This will be the 49th running of the best fish derby in Alaska, and the action starts Aug. 7.

This year's event will be the biggest ever, says Dorothy Ulfbeck, who has seen 'em all. The derby also coincides with the 50th wedding anniversary of one of Seward's favorite couples, Carol Ann and Dale Landrey. Congratulations and the usual good wishes are in order.

AND LET'S NOT let the opportunity pass for a reminder that the annual July 28 at the Anchorage Golf Course



"I wanted her for looks and she married me for money. Now we're even."

Governor's Picnic is coming up this Saturday on the Delaney Park Strip. The party starts at noon and will run until 4 o'clock. The food is free, and so is the conversation and other things that go with such affairs. Salmon will be the big thing on the menu this year, and it's all free. All you have to do is drop by and say hello to Frank and his friends.

MEANWHILE, LET'S return to the matter of nifty street names. Higher and you, a topic that came up here a few weeks ago. We have another entry in this no-prize-at-all contest, one submitted by a faithful reader who, sorry to say, wishes to remain anonymous. Maybe it's because of where she lives, which is on Haverly Way, just off Paragon Street, where Northern Lights Boulevard dead-ends at Muldoon Road. Don't get it? Say it slowly — as in the Burger King commercial "Have-It-Your-Way."

OKAY, SO YOU may groan about that. But you can't take issue with the fact that Anchorage and its suburbs have become Golf Central North in recent years, with some great courses and more tournaments than you can shake a 9-iron at. No way to keep track of them all, but let's give a plug to one on the immediate horizon — the fifth annual AT&T Alaskan tourney, scheduled July 28 at the Anchorage Golf Course.

It's a benefit affair, of course, one that helps support Alaska Public Radio Network and native programming on KNIB. Mike Felix, AT&T's head man, says more than \$50,000 has been raised in the four-nights first four years.

ON THE FLIGHT front, we're not alone in having a grand new airport concourse. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport has just opened a refurbished Concourse A, a 2,100-foot-long terminal with 14 gates and a great cluster of shops and food service areas. The price tag: \$587 million, which is more than \$200 million above the original budget. Of that, say Sea-Tac officials, \$122 million was the result of new security systems that had to be put in place after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

ELSEWHERE IN Washington state, a one-time long-ago worker in Anchorage bookkeeping, Deborah Senn, is seeking the Democratic nomination to become attorney general in Olympia, Wash., who bills herself as an aggressive liberal, was the state's elected state insurance commissioner from 1993-2001. Her last ballot bid was an unsuccessful run for the party's U.S. Senate nomination in 2002. In her bid, Alaska years, Senn worked for KTVU Channel 2.

DOWN IN COLORADO Springs, Lt. Col. Carl Chevalard has packed away his Air Force blues and wound up his career as one of the military's leading head directors. His final assignment as head of the U.S. Air Force Academy Band followed duties here as director of the Air Force Band of the Pacific at Elmendorf. In June, Chevalard received Ohio State University's 2004 School of Music Distinguished Alumni Award — the first band conductor so honored in the school's history.

SUNDAY PUNDAY: There they were, Fred and Charlie, having lunch one day at Sullivan's Steak House. Said Fred, "Too bad about our eye doctor." "What do you mean?" asked Charlie. "What happened to him?" "Oh," said Fred. "You didn't hear? He fell into a glass-grinding machine and made a spectacle of himself."

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Saturday, July 17, 2004 **B-5**

FEDS SAY LINES ARE WHITE...

'Just because'

SEVERAL MONTHS ago we asked the U.S. Department of Transportation why it mandated use of white lane markers in snow country, where you can't see the white paint when it's covered with white snow.

We got no answer so we asked the office of Congressman Don Young to put the question to the feds. After all, Young is chairman of the House Transportation Committee and has clout with those folks.

The bureaucracy must have pondered the question extensively, since their response was slow in coming. But the answer, with our paraphrasing, was "Just because. That's why."

Our concern was that white lane markers under white snow are all but invisible for the four to five months when our roads are pretty much covered with snow. White paint under white snow is — let's face it — a dumb idea.

An official in the Federal Highway Administration said government regulations require that highway markings be white, yellow, red or blue. For the record, white separates lanes of traffic moving in the same direction and yellow separates lanes moving in opposite directions. Red lines are not to be crossed and blue ones designate handicapped parking.

The FHWA man said the rules are the same for all states so that travelers will face similar markings wherever they go. That's certainly a good idea, but the result is that travelers who go north in winter are likely to see no markings at all.

ALASKANS KNOW enough to follow the tracks of the cars that went before, but some guy who just got off a flight from Florida might sit at the curb in his rental car and scratch his head, wondering where the lane markings went.

A bureaucracy is a wondrous thing, immovable and incapable of thought except in the broadest sense of the word. Granted that changing all the white lines in the nation would be a massive undertaking, but when confronted with rules that make no sense, it would seem that rethinking the issue might be in order.

Obviously the original decision to paint most of the lane markings white was made back when the first roads were paved and somebody decided painting lines would show drivers where to go. And presumably the decision was made in Washington, where snow is rare and quickly melts.

Those of us who live and drive in snow country must do without lane markers during the winter months. And we do so in a noble cause, that drivers who come here can see the same white-paint color they are used to at home.

They could see them, that is, if the white lines aren't covered up with white snow.

Same names, different games

After visiting your page on the Anchorage Daily News Web site, I see photos in just as many in Alaska as elsewhere. As a former Alaskan, I can still recall the names that are apparently still familiar in Alaskan politics, knowles, Muldrow, etc. I plan on visiting your page every so often to keep abreast of opinions in the 48th state.

Michael Rose
Lancaster, Penn.

Need more anti-liberalism

I wish your subject matter would be more representative of conservative views about current events, in order to counter the extreme liberalism of the Anchorage Daily News. Anyone can talk about Anchorage history, but you are the only ones who can put forth unadorned truth about what's happening in our country. As far as I can tell, you're presenting a very limited opportunity to present a more balanced view of things.

Steve Benson
Eagle River

His dog sees things differently

I don't know what Tom Brennan has been feeding poor Jack, but he deserves more accurate information. My dog, Sam, pointed out that the most recent Gallup poll, July 8-11, shows Kerry with 60 percent support, among likely voters with Bush 46 percent. I really think Tom and Jack have been listening to too much talk radio and watching way too much Fox news.

And what's the big deal about Kerry changing his mind? I have to say Sam and I don't think that's all bad. I think we would all be better off if Bush would change his mind occasionally.

Bush could have changed his mind and waited until the U.N. inspectors finished their job in Iraq, got the support of the United Nations to go into Iraq, asked for more information from Colin Powell and the State Department, and perhaps even his own father, before his presumptive invasion of Iraq.

Instead of continuing to beat drum about the link between al Qaeda and Iraq in hopes that it be heads it often and loud

Letters to The Times



enough we will believe him, he could change his mind and accept the 9/11 commission report that there was no linkage.

Finally, President Bush could change his mind and take responsibility for his mistakes like Kennedy did after the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Harry Truman had a sign on his desk that read, "The Buck Stops Here." I don't know where that sign is today, but wherever it is, it isn't on Bush's desk.

Ken Fulton
Idaho Falls, Idaho

Antics are life-threatening

I'm sorry that I understand exactly where Paul Jenkins is coming from (Face and pale July 2). Unfortunately, too many of us who believe in manners have reacted similar levels of frustration with these people. They wish for closer to disaster than they realize. Why can't they understand that when they risk your life and mine, they risk their own?

Jim Rowe
Eagle River

Sales tax, not bed tax

Your advocacy of raising the bed tax for the new convention center will make it harder for rural and remote Alaska village residents to afford to stay in Anchorage during the AFN convention, medical, and for business visits.

I hope that Anchorage will consider a sales tax to pay for that convention center. That way everyone, tourists, village visitors, and the residents of Anchorage

Keep schools accountable

"No Child Left Behind" holds public schools accountable for student achievement while encouraging choices for parents and unbureaucratic competition based on measurable results against increasingly challenging academic goals. This is a positive development in K-12 public education.

Michael P. Malone
The Leona Group
Phoenix, Ariz.

Medicare needs reform

Medicare is a farce, forced upon rich and poor alike. There is no choice when a person turns 65, private health care insurance is cut off and Medicare becomes the primary insurer. The problem is that Medicare limits payments to only a fraction of the doctor fees.

Based on Medicare's low opinion of the medical profession's value, it is easy to understand why doctors turn away the elderly who call for an appointment. Don't expect to circumvent the problem by offering to pay the doctor's regular fee, federal law bars them from charging more than Medicare's approved price.

What is needed is for Congress to get government completely out of health care other than to oversee its quality. Had the money deducted from my income over the years been put into private health insurance instead of Medicare, I could get an appointment today without having to go to a hospital emergency room, and doctors would no longer have to charge more to younger patients in order to subsidize those over 65.

Taxes paid by the insurers on increased profits would help provide for the uninsured few.

Lee Jordan
Chagach

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Printer

IF DEMOCRATS ASK FOR SIGNATURES ...

Just say no

TWO ANCHORAGE Democrats are pushing once again for an unwise gas reserves tax.

Thus time Reps. Eric Croft and Harry Crawford are launching a petition drive calling for a statewide vote on a tax, which is supposedly to be an incentive for major North Slope gas owners to build a gas pipeline.

We wish them no luck at all. Almost everyone wants a gas pipeline — especially the producers — but a punishing reserve tax would not help. It would only tarnish Alaska's image as a place for oil and gas investment and reinforce the notion that too many of our politicians are suspicious that the producers are somehow dragging their feet on the issue. But the truth is that the producers are moving ahead at a deliberate pace to make reality of the long-held dream of a gas pipeline from the North Slope to the U.S. Midwest.

Such a pipeline would be an enormous benefit to the state during construction and for many years to come. It would also require an investment on the order of \$20 billion, one that could make or break the companies that put up the money. Frustration over the slow pace in getting the project underway is understandable. But budgeoning tactics like imposing a reserves tax would be counterproductive and could scare away prospective investors of many kinds.

EVERN IF such a tax were passed and the producers moved ahead anyway, the message for major investors of the future would be the wrong one. The pipeline now has considerable momentum and it might be too late for the key players to be deterred by knot-headed legislation this time. But even if that were the case — and that is not at all clear — the implications for the future could be bad indeed.

One short-term and painful impact of such a tax to the pipeline. New gas finds would just add to producers' tax bills, and since most gas is found while looking for oil, the tax would be a disincentive for that drilling as well.

Croft and Crawford are planning a signature campaign to put the reserves tax issue on the November ballot. They would need approximately 30,000 signatures.

Many people are likely to sign such a petition in the hope that it would help get the pipeline built. But such a bullying approach to the North Slope companies could have nothing but bad consequences. It is the wrong message at the wrong time. It would prove only that Alaskans are impatient — which isn't all bad — and that they don't mind damaging their business partners to get what they want — which is bad indeed.

Alaska needs new investment and that means new oil and gas exploration and development in addition to the gas pipeline.

Now is the time for patience and encouragement, not bullying. If the Democrats ask you to sign their petition, just say no.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

British Columbia shows the way

By TOM BRENNAN

Alaska's tax-loving Democrats would do well to look at how British Columbia goes about getting more money out of its oil and gas industry.

Rather than squeeze more tax dollars out of existing companies, thereby reducing the value of their in-place investments, the province's leaders decided to lure more industry dollars by improving the climate for investor spending — including the golden goose, as one province of that put it.

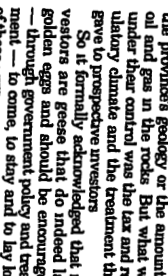
And they have had results — spectacular results. Since British Columbia elected a new government in 2001, it has more than doubled the number of oil and gas wells drilled, from 650 that year to 1,041 last year.

And tax and royalty revenue collected from the industry by the province last year was \$2.1 billion. That's up 70 percent from 2002. That would be about \$2.8 billion in U.S. currency. The total value of oil and gas production in B.C. last year was \$6.2 billion. Canadian, up from \$4.2 billion in 2002.

British Columbia is a much smaller oil producer than Alaska. It's primarily a gas province and cranks out about 1.1 trillion cubic feet of gas per year. By comparison the throughput of the Alaska gas pipeline will be something like 1.5 trillion cubic feet per year.

The dollar value of investments the province is attracting with its golden-goose approach is downright eye-popping — \$7.4 billion (U.S.) last year compared to about \$2 billion in much larger Alaska.

When the new Liberal government took over in 2001 (a political liberal in British Columbia is a far different cat than a liberal here) its marching orders to the province's Division of Oil and Gas were to grow the industry, attract more players and get them to bring money. Ross Curtis, assistant deputy minister of Energy and Mines, says his people decided they couldn't do anything about



the province's geology or the amount of oil and gas in the rocks. But what was under their control was the tax and regulatory climate and the treatment they gave to prospective investors.

So it formally acknowledged that investors are gasee that do indeed lay golden eggs and should be encouraged — through government policy and treatment — to come, to stay and to lay lots of those eggs.

The province invested in infrastructure, things like roads and power. It tweaked its tax and royalty scheme to improve investor profitability and increase their willingness to spend money on growth. It streamlined its permitting systems.

Curtis recommends against squeezing more out of existing taxpayers. Instead, he advises, increase government revenue by growing the amount of industry income to be taxed, which creates more jobs and is beneficial to everybody. He also says government tax burdens on industry should be stable and predictable.

In Alaska, the administration of Gov. Frank Murkowski and many members of the Legislature have a positive attitude toward new investment and are inclined to follow something like the British Columbia model.

But their approach contrasts sharply with the attitude of some misguided Democrats who want to take a larger

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Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday, July 15, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

DEMOCRATS TRY AGAIN TO ...

Muzzle Times

IT MUST BE election season again. Yard signs are springing up. Political ads are flooding the airwaves. And Democrats again are trying to muzzle *The Voice of The Times*.

A few years ago, Democrats claimed these editorial columns should be a paid ad, that it was not journalism, that it was partisan, that it was — their favorite refrain — unfair. They wanted to shut us up and remove our publisher, Bill Allen, from the political arena.

The party complained to the Alaska Public Offices Commission. To the left's chagrin, APOC found that by any measure this is a journalistic enterprise. The Democrats who filed the arcane claim lacked the integrity to even show up at the hearing to defend their silly claims.

Fast forward to Wednesday. Rod Call, a newspaper supposedly covering the nation's capital, apparently let itself be used like a dash rag in the race for the U.S. Senate seat held by Lisa Murkowski. It offered space to allow "Tony Knowles" campaign and a few fringe candidates to rant about Allen and *The Voice of The Times*.

Unable to muster new nonsense, Knowles and the others trotted out the same tired arguments as before. *The Voice of The Times* should be a paid ad because of Allen's political involvement, they said. It gives too much support for Murkowski, they said. And — surprise! — it's unfair, they said.

IT SHOULD come as no surprise except to the most dense among us that, yes, we are conservative. It says so in our masthead. Since Day One we have existed to balance the more liberal views of the Anchorage Daily News, where we are published daily under an agreement unique in journalism. Yes, we generally support conservative candidates and causes. Yes, our publisher, like publishers throughout history, is politically active. Yes, he gives campaign contributions. We are not bashful about any of that. It is all public record.

But Allen, other than setting out our editorial philosophy, does not direct the editors here on a daily basis. We are not part of, nor do we attend, political fund-raisers. We do not attend political activities, unless we are there to gather information for our work. We probably are as free to do as we wish as any editorial page editors anywhere.

The Rod Call article does note the Daily News has no problem with the arrangement, that the community understands who we are, and, that even Tom Rosenhahn, director for Excellence in Journalism, says he sees no conflict as long as it is all in the open.

Only Knowles and the political lions are atwitter. Perhaps it is a sign of desperation, perhaps something more sinister. Thus much is sure. People who fear open and honest debate to the extent they are willing to muzzle their opposition have no place in the Senate.

What are we teaching our kids?

By DAVID BOAZ

Can America's schools teach history? The question ought to be rhetorical — of course they can. What do we pay them for? History is as essential as reading and writing to a republic of free citizens. America's schools have always taught America's history.

Unfortunately, there's a lot of evidence that our schools are doing a poor job of it. Results of the 2001 National Assessment of Educational Progress showed that 67 percent of high school seniors scored below the "basic" level of history achievement. And "basic" isn't impressive. The test-makers believe that students should achieve the "proficient" level, but only 11 percent of seniors did.

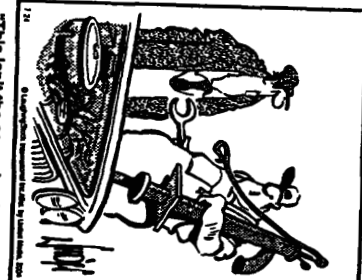
So the schools can't seem to teach the basics of American history. But they can teach some things — when they want to. For instance, the Washington Post recently surveyed 76 teen-agers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. It found that only one-third could name a general from World War II, and only half could name at least one battle. But two-thirds could describe how the Japanese-Americans were sent to internment camps.

Jeffery Charles was typical. She got a B in history at her high school in Montgomery County, Va., one of the nation's highest-rated school systems. She wasn't able to name a single general or battle. Nor did she know who was president during World War II, nor what year the war ended. She did, however, remember many details about the camps. "We talked a lot about those concentration camps," she told Post reporter Jay Matthews.

The NAEP showed something similar. In its 1994 survey, it found that only 39 percent of fourth-graders knew who said, "This government cannot endure half slave and half free" (Abraham Lincoln). And only 41 percent knew that the Pilgrims and Puritans came to America for religious freedom. But 69 percent knew that Susan B. Anthony was famous for helping women win the right to vote. Only 47 percent of high school seniors knew that containing communism was the most important goal of U.S. foreign policy between 1945 and 1990. But nearly 70 percent knew that infectious diseases brought by European settlers were the major cause of death among American Indians in the 1600s.

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"This isn't the correct water pump, but I'll make it fit."

One might suspect that our teachers are more determined to teach feminist history and the sins of America and its founders than the basic facts of American history and American achievement.

The 2001 report avoided anything that might be controversial. It did find, though, that only 36 percent of seniors could identify the Progressive movement (which revolutionized American law and government around 1900), while 68 percent could identify the Harlem Renaissance (an African-American artistic and literary movement during the 1920s).

A republican form of government requires citizens who understand their country's history and values. We can't decide where America is going unless we know where it has come from. American voters need to understand why people came to America and why they launched a revolution.

We need to know the values that our Founders proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence and instituted in the

Constitution. Individual liberty and limited, constitutional government are the fundamental values that have made our society prosperous and tolerant and welcoming to people from all over the world.

Our government has not always lived up to these values. The United States at its founding was marred by the cruel and tyrannical institution of slavery. Women were not treated as full human beings under the law. The government has fought unnecessary wars, kept blacks in a state of subjugation even after the abolition of slavery, and indeed put Japanese-Americans in internment camps after Pearl Harbor.

Students should learn about those things. But they need to learn them in the context of a free and successful society. Do the students who learn about the camps also study why millions of immigrants continue to flock to our shores? Do the teachers who make sure their students know how European diseases killed many Indians also teach them about the Bill of Rights and the threats that freedom has faced?

Students learn about the robber barons — ask any high school graduate, and that's likely to be the only thing he or she remembers about the 50 years between the Civil War and World War I. But they should also learn about the dynamic American economy that has brought an unprecedented standard of living to almost 300 million people, and about how those "robber barons" drove down the price of food, energy, and clothing to make them affordable to more people. The era of the robber barons was the era of the oil well, the railroad, the telephone, the phonograph, the copier and the skyscraper.

Most Americans want their children to learn about American freedom and representative government. If the teachers in our public schools don't want to teach those lessons, then parents should be free to put their children into schools that reflect their values — without having to pay twice.

David Boaz is executive vice president of the Cato Institute and editor of *The Libertarian Review*.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Wednesday, July 14 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

GOOD REASONS TO INCREASE...

Bed tax

ANCHORAGE VOTERS in the coming months will get to take a hard look at one of two proposals for a new convention center and then decide during the April municipal election whether to approve an increase in the hotel bed tax to pay for the project.

The process is welcome. A new, larger convention center is long overdue for the economic health of Anchorage, but the key will be an informed public.

If approved by voters — and it may require a 60 percent majority because the tax could be considered a sales tax — the city bed tax would increase to 12 percent, up from 8 percent. Those close to the project said the tax would pay off revenue bonds that would finance the project.

The administration of Mayor Mark Begich is expected soon to select one of the two plans under consideration — from JL Properties and Venture Development Group for what now is a parking lot near the Alwood Building, or from John Blomfield and George Swift, for an area near Ship Creek. The plans must include a way to incorporate the Egan Convention Center.

The idea is to gather as much information as possible in a bid to head off a replay of the 2002 defeat of a convention center ballot proposal. Voters will know before they ever enter the voting booth exactly where the center would be located, how it would be financed and who ultimately would be responsible. Unanswered questions such as those in 2002 sank that effort.

THERE IS NOT much doubt that a larger facility would attract bigger conventions than now are possible to schedule at the Egan Center.

These gatherings would spin off economic benefits across Anchorage, with one estimate indicating that every dollar generated by the new center would turn over seven times in the community.

There are those who will argue that if there truly were a demand for such a center, private enterprise would step up and build one, that government cannot be trusted to pull off such a large project. They generally use the Performing Arts Center's notorious problems and cost overruns during the city administration of then-Mayor Tony Knowles as a good example.

That line of thinking, however, overlooks the fact that the proposed center, whichever plan finally is adopted by the Begich administration, would be built with tax money collected by the hotel industry.

It would be good for business. It would be good for tourism. It would be good for the community — half of the bed tax collected would go into the city treasury. And it would cost taxpayers absolutely nothing.

It does not get much better than that.

Family, friends are spice of life

By ELISE PATKOTAK

My sister and the three cousins, Christopher, Michael and Joe III, are out having my cousin, Tim, is upstairs cooking. She's already cleaned the ceiling, made sugar-free cookies and is now baking potatoes so they'll be ready to become part of tomorrow's breakfast. It wouldn't be an Italian household if one of the women weren't in the kitchen at all times.

Her husband, Rich, is struggling with a recalcitrant screen door that has refused to glide smoothly for more than four years. It will either glide smoothly for him or it will be sorry it didn't.

I sit at my computer surrounded by family and thinking what an odd sensation that is. Usually my house holds my birds, my nervous little dog and me.

The animals are a bit discomfited by the excitement of the past few days. Such commings and goings as they have never before seen. So many deep male voices so many pairs of legs for my dog to duck, so many people in the living room at once. It presents an endlessly amusing show for my birds. For my dog, it's an opportunity to always have a fresh hand available for petting when the current hand gets tired.

Abdul, my African Grey, spins himself in circles trying to be the center of attention. Every word he knows, every sound he can make is brought into play in the hopes of bringing the tide of humanity towards him so that he can be that important.

The first morning the group was here, some got up earlier than me and wandered up to the kitchen for coffee. Abdul slept behind a curtain in the living room next to the kitchen. I stayed in bed for more than half an hour listening to him turn himself inside out to be charming to them. He went through his entire repertoire. He whined, he sang, he blew kisses. He said "Good morning" and "I love you." I'll have his voice soon. Yet no one pulled his curtain back to let him really join the fun.



Patkotak



I finally got up, went into the living room and opened the curtain while asking how hard-hearted they would have to be to not have done that themselves when they heard him working his little soul to exhaustion trying to charm them. They all admitted they were apologetic about doing anything to the birds because I am apparently somewhat scary when it comes to rearranging their nest.

When I first contemplated entertaining this many relatives at once, I must admit, I was intimidated. But then, as always, my Alaska family came to the rescue. I don't know that there are many other places in the world where you make the kind of good friends willing to host you and six of your closest relatives — to put it bluntly, to them — far barbeques.

But that's what my friends did for me. And when you consider that three of the six relatives were young men who gave new meaning to the phrase "teeny appetite," these friends were volunteering for no small hosting job.

Not only did they open their homes to my family, but they laid out their toys and books, four-wheelers and three-

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Tuesday, July 13, 2004 **B-5**

GREENS DEMON ...

Forest plan

IT'S DIFFICULT to sympathize with the environmental activists who are weeping over the Forest Service's decision to stick with its management plan for the Chugach National Forest.

One might even suspect that they are shedding crocodile tears. After all, what did they lose? Of the 5.6 million acres in the forest:

- 1.4 million acres of western Prince William Sound will be designated wilderness (if Congress goes along, and that's admittedly not a done deal).

- Another 1.2 million acres in western Prince William Sound will be retained in a primitive condition, though recreational cabins will continue to be used and floatplane and other aircraft landings will be allowed.

- 1.7 million acres in the Copper River Delta will be managed as roadless wildlife habitat, and,

- 1.2 million acres (the western portion of the Kana Peninsula) is to be managed largely as back country, with recreational use including snowmobiling. Its facilities will include campgrounds. Limited salvage of beetle-killed spruce trees will be allowed along road corridors. Mining also will be permitted, but that will almost certainly involve just small placer operations.

ALTOGETHER, 99 percent of the forest will remain roadless. But nothing will placate green extremists. No amount of wilderness is enough for them, nothing except every single acre of every forest, park and refuge. And the on people's needs — the needs of people other than themselves, that is.

A spokeswoman for the Alaska Center for the Environment bemoaned the decision and said most of the 30,000 comments on the plan wanted more conservation set-asides.

"I'm upset," she said. "A lot of people put their blood, sweat and tears into the public process, and they've been ignored."

Asked if the Forest Service knew where the 30,000 comments came from, one official said approximately 25,000 were postcards that were pasted inside a National Wildlife Federation member magazine. The cards were pulled out, signed and mailed, as instructed.

Several thousand other comments were on form letters resulting from mass mailings and appeals by the green groups. And approximately 2,000 were individual signed letters.

The planning process was a long one that allowed — for the first time — public participation in all meetings of the planning team, including experts in biology, forestry, engineering and other relevant sciences.

Many of the "public" participants at the meetings were the staffers and paid professionals for various interest groups, including and especially the greens. They, after all, are the ones with the time and motivation to attend such sessions.

While the meetings were going on, much of the real public was out in the forest having a good time.

Left wrong on risk from radicals

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Thank God for Hans Blix. Whenever we become lax and forgetful about how the world changed on Sept. 11, former chief inspector Blix is there to make the case for mindless complacency.

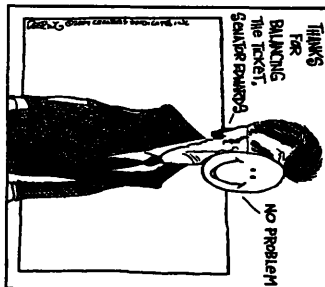
In a recent speech in Vienna he warned that one should be wary of the claim that "the risk that reckless groups and governments might acquire weapons of mass destruction is the greatest problem facing our world today." Why? Because "to hundreds of millions of people around the world, and also that wherever you live on this planet, the risk of global warming and other environmental threats are essential."

Here we are at the crux of a debate over the United States' aggressive interventionism of the past few years. Is Islamic radicalism in potential alliance with terrorist states that possess such weapons a threat to the very existence (hence, "essential") of the United States and of civilization itself?

On Sept. 12, 2001, and for many months after, that proposition was so self-evident that it commanded near unanimous support. With time — three years in which, contrary to every expectation and prediction, the second shoe never dropped — that consensus has evaporated.

The new idea, expressed by Blix representing the decadent European left, and recently amplified by Michael Moore representing the paranoid American left, is that this existential threat is vastly overblown.

Indeed, deliberately overblown by a corrupt/ clueless (take your pick) President Bush to justify American aggression for reasons of and here is where the left gets a little fuzzy, not quite being able to decide whether American aggression is intended simply to enrich multinational corporations — or maybe just Halliburton alone — with fat war contracts, distract from alleged failure in Afghanistan, satisfy some primal



masculine urge or boost poll ratings.

We have come a long way in three years. The idea that Sept. 11 was a historic turning point, a wake-up call to a war declared by our enemies but ignored by us, has begun to fade. The week after the attacks, the late-night comedy shows went dark — and upon returning to the air they were almost apologetic about telling jokes, any jokes, ever again.

Today, Moore produces a full-length film parody of Sept. 11 and its aftermath that is not just highly celebrated but commands a huge popular audience. To be sure, Moore's version is not quite as crazed as the French bestseller claiming that the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center were remotely controlled by the CIA at the behest of the president.

Moore merely implies some sinister plot, citing connections between the Bush and bin Laden families. It's a long way from two years ago, when Rep. Cynthia McKinney was run out of Congress for suggesting that Bush had foreknowledge. (She is today in a tight race, with a very good chance of regaining her seat.)

Unlike the French book or the Moore movie, Blix is not damaged. He is merely in denial, discounting the uniqueness of the WMD-terror-

ism issue by comparing it to global warming and hunger. Yes, hunger is an existential issue to the people suffering it. As are car accidents, heart disease and earthquakes. But they hardly threaten to destroy civilization. Hunger is a scourge that has always been with us and that has not been a threat to humanity's existence for at least 1,000 years. Global warming might one day be, but not for decades, or even centuries, and with a grandeur that will leave years for countermeasures.

There is no grandeur and there are no countermeasures to a dozen nuclear warheads detonating simultaneously in U.S. cities. Think of what just two envelopes of anthrax did to paralyze the capital of the world's greatest superpower. A serious, coordinated attack on the United States using weapons of mass destruction could so shatter America as a functioning, advanced society that it would take generations to rebuild.

What is so damning is that such an obvious truth needs repeating. The passage of time, the propaganda of the anti-American left and the setbacks in Iraq have changed nothing of that truth. This is the first time in history that the knowledge of how to make society-destroying weapons has been democratized. Today small radical groups allied with small radical states can do the kind of damage to the world that in the past only a great, strategically located and industrialized power such as Germany or Japan could do.

It is a new world and exceedingly dangerous. Everything is at stake. We are now deeply engaged in a breast-beating exercise for not having connected the dots before Sept. 11. And yet here we are three years after Sept. 11, with the dots already connected, and we are under a powerful urge to ignore them completely.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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Monday, July 12, 2004 B-5

SOLDIERS WILL BE SPORTING NEW ...

Combat wear

IT WILL BE a while, no doubt, before we see all the soldiers at Fort Richardson attired in the Army's new combat uniforms. Until the new duels for the men and women of the Air Force at Elmendorf Air Force Base. But they're on the way for both services.

For the Army, the new combat uniforms are a done deal, heading for the on-post supply rooms starting in October 2005. The entire Army, the Pentagon says, will be wearing the new uniforms by December 2007.

The Air Force uniforms are still in a test-market mode. The new utility uniforms are being tested by between 35 and 50 airmen each at Elmendorf, Hurt-burt Field, Fla., Langley AFB, Va., Luke AFB, Ariz., McChord AFB, Wash., Ramstein AFB, Germany, Robins AFB, Ga., Vandenberg AFB, Calif., and Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

The new clothing, making the first major makeover in an Army combat uniform since 1981, will be roomier, to accommodate more body armor being provided troops, and will come with a couple of attractions ...

THE NEW Air Force design is a tiger-stripe pattern predominantly in blue and gray shades. The fabric is a blend of cotton and polyester, made for wash-and-wear use. Dry cleaning, ironing and starch will be out.

The jacket, with an inside map pocket but without lower pockets, can be worn tucked into the trousers or left out, as the Air Force battle dress uniform is used now. The on-site wear tests will last six months, with evaluations from those wearing the new uniforms to be factored into the final design — before the go-ahead is given to make the change throughout the Air Force.

On the Army side, easy care was a major factor in adopting the new uniform.

Come will be today's two combat designs: tan-brown for the desert and green-brown-black for other parts of the world. The new look will be a mix of light green, tan and gray — for use whenever the troops go.

The digitally applied pattern will be on a uniform that will have a lot of pockets fastened with Velcro.

The new clothing, marking the first major makeover in an Army combat uniform since 1981, will be roomier, to accommodate more body armor being provided troops, and will come with a couple of attractions that should make soldiers happy: a wrinkle-free fabric and tan, no-shine combat boots.

As old soldiers hereabouts can attest, shining combat boots often occupied hours of time that they would rather have used in different pursuits. The new GIs have reason to cheer.

Junk science on DDT is a big killer

By WALTER WILLIAMS

Ever since Rachel Carson's 1962 book "Silent Spring," environmental extremists have sought to ban all DDT use. Using phony studies from the Environmental Defense Fund and the Natural Resources Defense Council, the environmental activist-controlled Environmental Protection Agency banned DDT in 1972.

The extremists convinced the nation that DDT was not only unsafe for humans but unsafe to birds and other creatures as well. Their arguments have since been scientifically refuted.

While DDT saved crops, forests and livestock, it also saved humans. In 1970, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences estimated that DDT saved more than 600 million lives during the time it was widely used. A scientific review board of the EPA showed that DDT is not harmful to the environment and showed it to be a beneficial substance that "should not be banned."

According to the World Health Organization, worldwide malaria infects 300 million people. About 1 million die of malaria each year. Most of the victims are in Africa, and most are children.



Williams

In Sri Lanka, in 1948, there were 2.8 million malaria cases and 7,300 malaria deaths. With widespread DDT use, malaria cases fell to 17 and no deaths in 1963. After DDT use was discontinued, Sri Lankan malaria cases rose to 2.5 million in the years 1968 and 1969, and the disease remains a killer in Sri Lanka today.

More than 100,000 people died during malaria epidemics in Swaziland and Madagascar in the mid-1980s, following the suspension of DDT house spraying. After South Africa stopped using DDT in 1986, the number of malaria cases in KwaZulu-Natal province skyrocketed from 8,000 to 42,000. By 2000, there had been an approximate 400 percent



increase in malaria deaths. Now that DDT is being used again, the number of deaths from malaria in the region has dropped from 340 in 2000 to none at the last reporting in February 2003.

In South America, where malaria is endemic, malaria rates soared in countries that halted house spraying with DDT after 1983 — Guyana, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. In Ecuador, DDT spraying was increased after 1993, and the malaria rate of infection was reduced by 60 percent.

In a 2001 study published by the London-based Institute for Economic Affairs, "Malaria and the DDT Story," Richard Tren and Roger Bate say that "Malaria is a human tragedy, adding, 'Over 1 million people, mostly children, die from the disease each year, and over 300 million fall sick.'"

The fact that DDT saves lives might account for part of the hostility toward it. Alexander King, founder of the Malthusian Club of Rome, wrote in a biographical essay in 1990: "My own doubts came when DDT was introduced in Guyana, within two years, it had almost eliminated malaria. So my chief quarrel with DDT, in hindsight, is that it has greatly added to

the population problem." Dr. Charles Wurster, one of the major opponents of DDT, is reported to have said, "People are the cause of all the problems. We have too many of them. We need to get rid of some of them, and thus (referring to malaria deaths) is as good a way as any."

Spraying a house with small amounts of DDT costs \$14 per year, alternatives are five to 10 times more, making them unaffordable in poor countries. Rich countries that used DDT themselves threaten reprisals against poor countries if they use DDT.

One really wonders about religious groups, the Congressional Black Caucus, government and non-government organizations, politicians and others who profess concern over the plight of poor people around the world while at the same time accepting or promoting DDT bans and the needless suffering and death that follow. Mosquito-borne malaria not only has devastating health effects but stifles economic growth as well.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Sunday, July 11, 2004 J-3

NATIONAL ECONOMY MOVES INTO...

Sweet spot

THE NATIONAL ECONOMY seems headed for a banner year despite media gloom over energy prices and the recent increase in interest rates.

Many experts are forecasting that growth in the gross domestic product for 2004 will be 4.6 percent or better, the best in 20 years.

Energy prices are a concern on a national basis even though they are giving Alaska's treasury an important boost, but worry over increasing interest rates is actually just media hype.

The rates have been at near-historic lows in recent years because they were slashed by the Federal Reserve to encourage economic growth. That strategy worked and the rates are now being adjusted upward to reduce the tendency for growth to cause inflation. That's not something to be alarmed about.

It will be interesting to see whether President George W. Bush gets credit for the economic surge. That might or might not happen, depending on how the media treat the story.

Given their preference for bad news, it could be ignored until the trend becomes obvious to everyone and impossible to ignore.

BUSH'S PREDECESSOR, Bill Clinton, likes to take credit for the economic expansion that occurred on his watch, though it primarily was fueled by President Ronald Reagan's tax policies and the dot com revolution, not anything Clinton did. Bush actually inherited a recession that began in the last year of Clinton's term, a recession now just ending.

To most Americans, who give credit for the economic growth will not be as important as the benefits they derive from it. And some weak spots remain, including rising health costs and some hard-off workers who are unhappy with lower-wage jobs they were forced to take in order to keep money coming in.

But an upward trend eventually should be beneficial to most people. As one expert at Bank One in Chicago described what's happening, "We are moving into a sweet spot for the economy with interest rates not too high, jobs coming back and business investment providing strength."

And that, no matter how you look at it, is good news indeed.

Couldn't say it better ourselves

"Among recent Vice Presidential candidates, Mr. Edwards compares in experience to Geraldine Ferraro (1984) and Spiro Agnew (1968) but knows less about defense than Dan Quayle (1988)."

—The Wall Street Journal

Our old town is bulging at the seams

BY WILLIAM J. TOBIN

IF YOU'VE BEEN one of those complaining about increased traffic on Anchorage's too-few streets, there's a good reason for your angst. The city's population is now 274,000, according to new census reports for 2003 — an increase of 8,265 in just a year's time. Throw in the Mat-Su, and 341,476 of Alaska's total population of 648,818 lives in this area. And those are just last year's numbers.

IF ANCHORAGE maintains its current annual growth rate, we will be larger than St. Louis in five or six years. St. Louis population in the 2003 figures is listed as 332,000 and declining — as of now, only 57,997 ahead of Anchorage. Within its city limits, St. Louis lost 15,966 residents between the 2002 and the 2003 census.

Speaking of being ahead on the census packing order, the new figures show that Seattle, with a population of 671,900, is now a tad larger than Boston — city limit to city limit, that is. Seattle picked up 8,526 new residents in the past year.

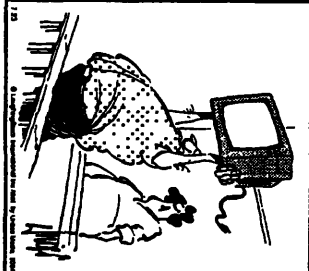


Tobin

MEANWHILE, HAPPY 90th birthday today to Meryl Neeson, widow of the late Maj. Gen. Nick Neeson, a World War II flying hero and later two adjutant general of Alaska. She will light the candles and cut the cake at a party at the Seabreeze Resort at Seward, Alaska, just southeast of Seattle, along with her daughter and son-in-law, Sandee and Chip Kelly, her other daughter, Ginger Longway, and her granddaughters, Breeann Blazer and April Werman. Meryl lives with the Kellys in Port Orchard, Wash. All told, the new 90-year-old has five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Her husband, whose formal name was Conrad F. Neeson, died at the age of 85 on Jan. 15, 1987. He served as Alaska's adjutant general under three governors, from 1967-71 and again from 1974-82. During World War II, he commanded

THE MUSIC MACHINE, Janet Carr Campbell's joyful annual stage production, can't yet claim to be 50 years old — but it will celebrate its 25th year next month. The show, scheduled Aug. 11-14 at the Discovery Theatre in 82 Durning World War II, he commanded



There must be something worth watching!

est the 7th Bomb Group in the Southwest Pacific and in the China-Burma-India Theater in the process earning the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Silver Star and a Purple Heart. He headed the Alaska Air Command at Elmendorf Air Force Base from 1958-61. He returned from active Air Force duty in 1965, after 29 years of service that began with his graduation from West Point in 1936.

WHILE ON THE subject, the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for its 50th birthday, which will roll around in 2006. To help in the planning, the chamber had the services this summer of Jerry Rott, a Reagan fellow at Purdue College in Illinois. Among her tasks were oral-history interviews with a number of past chamber presidents and chairmen who are still on the scene. For the record, J.H. Smith and Anthony J. Wendler served as presidents of the chamber during its first year in 1915. Shane Langford is the latest in the line of 79 others, including three women, who have headed the chamber over the years.

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William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

Saturday, July 10, 2004 B-5

WE LEARNED SOMETHING NEW ABOUT...

Traffic laws

WE TOOK what turned out to be an undeserved shot the other day at two police officers who sat at a red light while a motorist turned left from Arctic Boulevard onto Benson Boulevard.

We should have put on the brakes before putting that particular editorial in print. Turns out, it was wrong.

While almost anybody will tell you correctly that it is legal to turn left from a one-way street onto another one-way street with traffic going in the direction of the turn, we are now informed — by the Police Department, as a matter of fact — there are times when you can do the same thing from a two-way street.

Anchorage's traffic code spells out the when and where.

It says a motorist "may make a left turn from a one-way or two-way roadway into a one-way roadway carrying traffic in the direction of the left turn, provided that the movements described in this subsection are not allowed if a sign posted by state or local authority prohibits these movements, or directs the driver's attention to an arrow signal which controls these movements."

Apparently some of our readers knew what we did not that was as red as our faces are now, and the police officers who sat and watched were just doing their jobs.

Race is on

THE RAT RACE will continue in Palmer. That might not sound like good news to those caught up in their own rat races at work, but the Palmer race in question runs during the Alaska State Fair. And despite its publicity, the race uses gerbils rather than rats.

Before the State Senate closed out its legislative business in Juneau this year, it passed a bill to allow the Palmer Elks Lodge to continue a classic charitable gaming event.

The State Fair rat races involve placing wiggers on which numbered hole a gerbil will dive into after being released. It has been a popular fair event for more than 50 years and is an important fund-raiser for various Valley charities.

Cheering for their favorites and urging the gerbil to choose a specific hole is also a way for people caught up in their own rat races to let off steam.

New year-round Alaska industry

By LEW M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Repairing the state ferry Le Conte is the fourth emergency to which Ketchikan Shipyard has responded this year. The 20th in 10 years of operation. And to think it was in the mid 1990s that top officials of the Alaska Department of Transportation sought to shut down Ketchikan Shipyard and sell the drydock, its employees.

Fortunately for DOT and Alaskans, wisest heads instead moved shipyard control from DOT to the Alaska Industrial and Export Authority (AIDEA). That shipyard now can put DOT's ferry Le Conte back in operation in record time after its grounding mishap, without the cost and time-loss of towing it south.

Ketchikan Shipyard was conceived when state Reps. Terry Gardiner and Orin Freeman and Sen. Bob Zoeller, all of Ketchikan, secured a \$30 million appropriation in the 1970s for the facility. The shipyard opened in 1987. The initial appropriation bought the land, the dry dock and built the main pier. But it didn't complete the shipyard to an economically viable operation, as several unsuccessful operators found out.



Williams

A plan developed in 1982 laid out what more was needed to complete an economically viable yard. The price tag is \$63 million in today's dollars. It includes another shipyard for moving vessels onto land berths for repair, large structures for working under a cover and other facilities.

After being closed for several years, the shipyard reopened in 1994 when a mat, headed by Randy Johnson, formed Alaska Ship and Drydock, and took over operation of Ketchikan Shipyard on a contract with DOT. In 1997, local pressure overrode DOT's desire to shut down the yard and it went to AIDEA. Alaska Ship and Drydock worked out an operating agreement with Ketchikan Shipyard has an agreement.



Shipyard worker

with AIDEA in which they share the profits, if any, and work to complete the 92 plan. Keeping the yard ownership makes it eligible for government grants. Rep. Don Young has a \$25 million grant in a federal budget bill.

Part of the plan has been completed thanks to earlier grants and appropriations. A large machine shop has been constructed. The shipyard opens bids in July for another drydock, expected to cost near \$10 million. It will enable the yard to build more vessels and handle maintenance on all vessels up to 250 feet in length.

Doug Ward, director of business development for Ketchikan Shipyard, says that except for large cruise ships and tankers, most vessels operating in Alaska waters are 250 feet or less. So the second drydock will boost the repair capacity of the yard, which operates now with only the one 450-foot dry dock.

The shipyard serves vessel owners from Puget Sound to the North Pacific high seas fishing fleet, including Canadian companies. The shipyard built Ketchikan Gateway Borough's largest airport ferry, the Orin Freeman, so it has construction experience. In addition, Ketchikan Shipyard has an agreement.

to build an unusual ferry designed by Lockheed for use in Alaska. The first one goes in the water in 2005. It will be used as a ferry across Kik Arm near Anchorage before the causeway is built. Small Alaska communities without ferry service have heard about the revolutionary new design and are interested.

The ship looks like a 200-foot sealer. It is called a Vercraft because it can be used as a landing craft to provide ferry service to villages and camps without a ferry dock. And it operates at high speed in deep water.

This brings a whole new ship construction program — and jobs — to Alaska.

The shipyard takes advantage of its large floating dry dock by lifting several ships or barges at a time. An Army tug and barge from Puget Sound and the LeConte are keeping two crews busy as this is written. The second dry dock, designed to also transfer vessels to dryland berths, further boosts the yard's capacity.

For the past year the yard has employed up to 100 highly paid skilled workers. Although its gross revenue has averaged \$10 million over the past 10 years, a 1999 revised plan estimates that on completion of the yard it can average \$33 million a year and employ an average of 200 skilled workers.

Its operation creates other jobs in the community. With all the jobs and purchases of supplies and services, it injects about \$5 million into the state and community each year. That amount can triple with the yard's completion.

Ward believes shipyard business projections are conservative. If the Lockheed Vercraft design is successful, it might have military use. And although the shipyard builds and services ships, it can build portable harbors and such items as ranges for boat harbors.

It is creating a new industry in Alaska. It works year around and the busiest time is during winter when other industries are relatively inactive.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

WHO WILL SUPPORT KNOWLES IS...

Hard to tell

IT MUST BE difficult for U.S. Senate hopeful Tony Knowles when fellow Democrats, including presidential candidate John Kerry and his vice-presidential running mate, John Edwards, continually and proudly turn their backs on Alaska.

Despite Knowles' support of oil exploration on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, both Kerry and Edwards, who has yet to complete his first term in the Senate, repeatedly have voted to keep ANWR closed and America dependent on foreign oil.

Knowles, as governor, was unable to change President Bill Clinton's mind on ANWR, and Clinton vetoed legislation that would have opened the desolate coastal plain to strictly controlled exploration. He had little, if any, success in persuading Democratic senators to see it his way, either.

Knowles now has joined two other "independent Democrats" calling for Congress to "revisit" the ANWR issue before the Senate recesses. The three chatted yesterday with reporters at the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee in Washington, D.C.

If we were working for Knowles, we, too, would be lobbying and praying that our Democratic brothers and sisters in Congress finally would help his campaign.

But we also would know that the chances are somewhere between slim and none.

Pain as day

WITH ALL the hoopla over improved and vigorous enforcement of city traffic laws you have to wonder what happened the other morning at the usually busy intersection of Arctic and Benson boulevards.

A driver was waiting during a red light on Arctic to turn left onto Benson. In the lane to his right, a police vehicle was one car behind. There was another police vehicle two cars farther back.

For whatever reason, the driver waiting to turn did just that — while the light still was a red as a Democrat caught with his hand in his own pocket. It was blatant.

Did the police red lights come on? Was there a wail of sirens? Did the officers rush to nail the offender who broke the law right in front of them and several citizens? You would think they would have been all over him like a cheap suit. After all, red light runners are killers. In this city they supposedly are prime targets for police who continue to tell us they are concentrating on every aspect of traffic enforcement.

Well, you guessed it. The officers just sat there as if nothing had happened while our red-light-musing motorist disappeared into the distance. Motorists behind them just looked at each other and shook their heads.

Go figure

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

Friday, July 9, 2004 B-7

Will the real John Kerry stand up?

By TOM BRENNAN

Many people have asked me how my dog and I are able to converse, being different species and all, he's a Democrat and I'm a Republican.

But, let's be cynical Democrats so he is easy to talk to. Just the other day he was bragging about the fact that the polls are proving him right. He told me weeks ago that the more people get to know San John Kerry, the less they will like him.

Now a New York Times/CBS poll shows that nearly 40 percent of Americans don't have any opinion at all about Kerry despite the fact that the liberal Massachusetts politician already has run a hugely expensive and record-breaking advertising campaign.

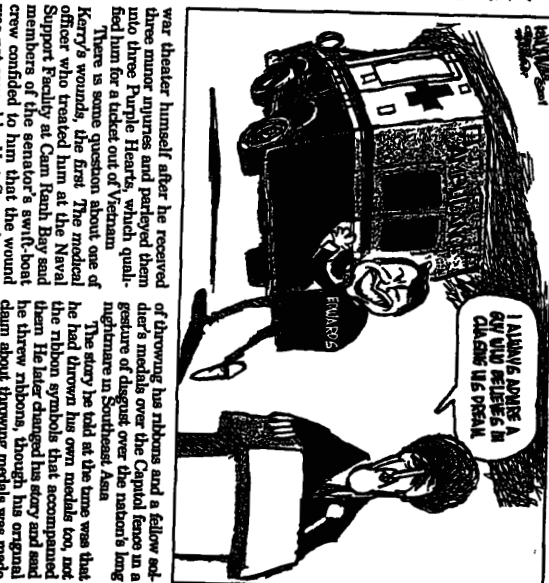
More than 50 percent said Kerry tells people what they want to hear — he is on whichever side you are on. Just tell him what side that is and he is on it, or seems to be.

Kerry is, of course, a man of the people who just happens to have a wife with a billion dollars in the bank. (Mon of the people are not what they used to be. When I was a kid and Jack was a pup the average guy didn't have a billion stashed away, maybe a hundred bucks, if he was lucky.)

Kerry doesn't actually go in opposite directions so often these days, but he changes directions so often it seems that way. He is, to put it politely, unaccounted for. Or, to be less polite, an opportunist.

His recent selection of Sen. John Edwards as his running mate is a good example. "In the Senate four years and that is the full extent of public life," Kerry said of Edwards in Iowa. No international experience, no military experience. When I came back from Vietnam in 1969, I don't know if John Edwards was out of diapers.

That was an exaggeration, of course. Edwards was in his early teens when Kerry finished his four months in the combat zone, well beyond the dispersal stage for most folks. And Kerry left the



war theater himself after he received three minor injuries and peddled them into three Purple Hearts, which qualified him for a ticket out of Vietnam.

There is some question about one of Kerry's wounds, the first. The medical officer who treated him at the Naval Support Facility at Camp Hahn Bay said members of the senator's swim-team crew confided to him that the wound was not caused by Viet Cong shooting but by self-inflicted friendly fire.

They said their skipper was hit on the arm by a piece of shrapnel that bounced back into the boat after Kerry fired a mortar when they were too close to shore. He had a small piece of metal sticking into his arm, it was removed and covered by a Band-Aid.

None of the Purple Hearts was for anything serious, which isn't unheard of. Kerry also won a Bronze Star and a Silver Star for acts of courage, which might or might not have been exaggerated. At this late date it is impossible to tell. There is no question that his life was at some risk during his four months in Vietnam, but his fondness for changing his story confounds any attempt to sort out the truth.

For example, as the world knows, Edwards was in his early teens when Kerry finished his four months in the combat zone, well beyond the dispersal stage for most folks. And Kerry left the

of throwing his ribbons and a fellow soldier a medals over the Capitol fence in a gesture of disgust over the nation's long nightmare in Southeast Asia.

The story he told at the time was that he had thrown his own medals too, not the ribbon symbols that accompanied them. He later changed his story and said he threw ribbons, though his original claim about throwing medals was made on a news program and videotaped. A cynic might say that the uncut award him to make a symbolic gesture without actually throwing away the prized hardware. He was having it both ways, which seems to be a Kerry specialty.

Now Kerry is presenting another face and — where he once professed shame about the war and accused his fellow soldiers of atrocities — he suggests he is now proud of his participation in the war.

Where once Kerry claimed to be appalled at the thought of John Edwards in the White House, now he argues solemnly that Edwards is an excellent choice to be a headstrong away from the presidency. To be blunt, should he be elected — and I certainly hope he is not — Americans seem sure to be asking themselves from time to time: Was he lying then or is he lying now?

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Thursday, July 8, 2004 B-5

SUDANESE GIVE COLIN POWELL A...

Warm hello

SECRETARY OF STATE Colin Powell waded through churning throngs in the North African nation of Sudan last week.

Were the crowds chanting messages of hatred against an emissary from the U.S. White House?

No. Actually they were victims of violence who were cheering, clapping and howling because Powell was there on a mission of American mercy. He demanded that the Sudanese government bring under control the marauding Arab militias that have been attacking black African villages.

The secretary also demanded that Sudan lift the restrictions hindering the delivery of food and medicine to more than 100 camps in the country's vast Darfur region.

Afterward, the Sudanese foreign minister held a joint news conference with Powell and promised that his government would indeed crack down on the militias and improve the flow of humanitarian aid.

The relief effort is aimed at improving the lot of more than 1 million people left homeless when they fled the violence. Powell's enthusiastic reception by the downtrodden and wronged people of Sudan was a welcome contrast to the usual pictures of hatred for Americans abroad painted by too many of the news media.

WHETHER THE Sudanese government will keep its promises remains to be seen. Its record in that regard is not good. But the Bush administration last month threatened to impose serious sanctions on Sudan and to refuse visas to Sudanese officials. It appears serious about resolving the problem.

Kofi Annan, secretary general of the United Nations, also visited Sudan recently and the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution calling for an end to the fighting. But council members, worried about their relations with the Sudanese government, made the resolution toothless.

And the European Union hurried in a long report about its recent summit meeting a statement of "deep concern" about the humanitarian crisis in Sudan. But it shows no inclination to take action of any kind. Regional organizations like the Arab League are similarly disinclined to help.

The United States is once again forced to go it alone on an international mission, this time one of mercy, but Sudan has become the latest killing field and the violence must be stopped.

For the moment, Colin Powell's visit and the prospect of U.S. diplomatic pressure are the world's best hope for an end to the violence and renewing the flow of much-needed aid and food supplies.

The reception Powell received suggests that the people of Sudan welcome and appreciate American intervention.

Greece chose wisely; will Alaska?

By BOB RICHARDS

As the shorted special session of the Legislature called by the governor to enact a responsible comprehensive fiscal plan for the state of Alaska fades into memory, we now turn our attention to the next big event of this summer: the Olympic Games in Athens. The two — Alaska and Greece — have something interesting in common, and it is important that we focus on this for a moment.

Five hundred years before the birth of Christ, Greece became the first democratic society in the history of the world. Soon thereafter, when an enormously rich silver hole was discovered, hugely increasing the level of wealth of Greece, the citizens of this democratic society clamored for their new wealth to be distributed among the citizens, and there was popular support among politicians for doing just that.

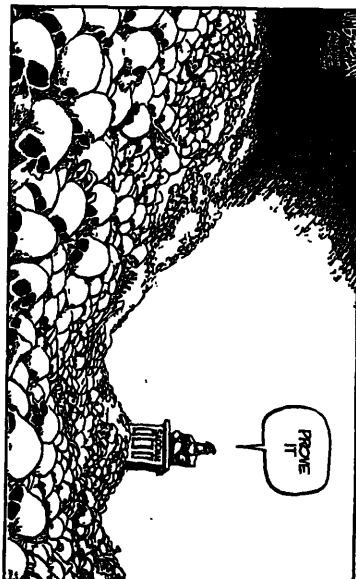
Fortunately for humanity, greater wisdom prevailed. The Athenian statesman Themistocles persuaded the people of Athens to, instead of distributing their newly found wealth among the people, build a modern, state-of-the-art navy to protect Athens from possible invasion.

Eventually, this navy, financed by silver wealth, became the decisive factor in enabling the Greeks to defeat the invading Persians. Out of this decisive victory came the powerful surge of Greek civilization with the development of a rich culture of drama, poetry, sculpture, architecture and philosophy that continues to influence Western civilization today.

Such wisdom and foresight in the use of their silver-based wealth. Instead of dissipating their wealth among the citizens, leaving them defenseless and bound to become slaves of the Persians, the Greeks harnessed their wealth, used it for the collective good and assured control of their own destiny.

If Alaska is going to have an enlightened future in which Alaskans control their own destiny, it is imperative that they dispel two myths surrounding the Permanent Fund.

The first myth has to do with who owns Alaska's resources. It is not the statehood of 1958. Congress, concerned that the conventional means of taxation



would be inadequate due to Alaska's vast size and small and widely dispersed population, conveyed a huge 103.5 million acres of land and the resources within from the federal government to the state government as a source of revenue to fund the state of Alaska. The notion that the oil owned by the corporate state of Alaska is instead "for (the people's) oil" is a myth.

The second myth has to do with the very creation of the Permanent Fund. It was not created as a vehicle to funnel state funds to the people. In 1976, with revenue flowing to the state in greater amounts than needed in the short run, Alaskans established the Permanent Fund, anticipating the day when resources revenue might decline and recognizing the severe fluctuations in revenue because of swings in oil prices.

In establishing the fund, Alaskans exhibited impressive understanding of the statehood mandate and further exhibited wisdom in creating a vehicle through which nonrenewable resource revenue — from oil — could be converted to renewable resource revenue — a portfolio of investment securities.

It was not until four years after creation of the Permanent Fund that the idea of a dividend was proposed. I was one of those who originally supported the concept of the dividend. The state was swathed with revenue, and there was

fear that leaving that entire largesse in the hands of politicians would simply lead to government bloat. But conditions over the last quarter of a century have changed. And the signs of maturity and wisdom is the ability to change one's mind in the light of new facts, new conditions, new insights.

We have learned two extremely important realities: (1) the volume of Alaska oil production has fallen precipitously to half what it was two decades ago and (2) oil prices constantly swing erratically and will continue to do so.

The statehood mandate of nearly a half-century ago and the Permanent Fund authorization of over a quarter of a century ago reflect uncanny foresight on the part of Alaskans' forebears. These two mechanisms — one providing resources, another administering the return from the resources — come together to provide the means to meet today's needs.

Gov. Frank Murkowski understands this. He has put forth an impressive comprehensive fiscal plan that will effectively ensure Alaska's fiscal health and economic vibrancy. Alaskans, as the wise Greeks, follow your Themistocles!

Bob Richards, a Seattle resident, was an Alaska economist for twenty years and recently served as an advisor to the Alaska Fiscal Policy Council.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

IN HIS LONG CAREER . . .

He built Alaska

IN HIS NINE decades of life, Al Swalling was a man with many careers and more skills than can be counted. Carpenter. Farmer. Woodsman. Fisherman. Mechanic. Tunnel driller. Engineer. Contractor. Entrepreneur. Risk taker. Builder.

Put the emphasis on builder. In a hundred different ways, this remarkable man was a builder.

He built chicken coops. He built houses. He built apartment buildings. He built military bases. He built runways for World War II bombers. He built piers and docks to withstand the storms of the Gulf of Alaska and the North Pacific. And he built friendships that lasted a lifetime — a long and beautiful life that ended early last Saturday when he died at Providence Hospital, even as he was planning on heading home to host once again what had become a traditional Fourth of July picnic at his Turnagain home.

He was a little more than two months shy of his 94th birthday when his heart gave out. With his death, a great personality and a true Alaska pioneer passed into the annals of the state he loved.

Al Swalling came to Alaska for the first time in April 1930, arriving in Cordova to help build the railroad to the Kenai coast, mine.

Jobs were scarce in Washington state, where he had learned the carpenter's trade after graduating from the 8th grade, which was the end of his formal schooling. But he was a learner, a self-taught master of many trades and professions.

HE SPENT two summers working in Alaska before he came back to stay — making Cordova his home, and falling in love and marrying Minnie Dooley, who served him ice cream at Roesweg's store.

They were married in January 1937, and shared adventures that followed as war came to Alaska's Aleutian Islands. Deferred from the military because of his critical importance to wartime construction projects, Swalling settled his wife in Anchorage as he headed for Shemya to supervise the construction of runways until Japan's surrender.

He formed Swalling Construction Co. in 1947 and his company built schools, the McKinley Building and the 1200 L Street apartment building, among hundreds of projects in Anchorage. All the while he handled jobs at Whittier, Fort Richardson, Cordova, Big Delta, Palmer, St. George, St. Paul — anywhere and everywhere, including Greenland.

He was a community leader, a philanthropist, a golfer, a story teller of great wit. Through all the years, through all the challenges, through the economic ups and downs, he remained a gentle and a decent man. He and Minnie shared a warm and wonderful life, hosted great parties, treasured their family and friends.

As he grew older, Al Swalling's spirits were always high, and his visions and hopes for Alaska never faded. He left a mark that will endure.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Wednesday, July 7, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Nothing's easy with feathered friends

By ELISE PATKOTAK

I belong to an organization called the Alaska Parrot Education and Adoption Center, or APEAAC. This group has, at times, been referred to as the bird Nazis. There's a reason they have that reputation. It's well-deserved and well-earned.

With APEAAC, birds and their welfare trump all other factors. Which means that well-meaning people who want to adopt or foster a bird find themselves facing almost more training sessions and evaluations than people who want to adopt or foster children.

I bought my first bird in 1970 from a department store in Brooklyn. Not much was known about parrots back then. I didn't have to take a course and they came with no instructions. Birds were considered easy pets to own because you didn't have to walk them and you could fill their food and water dish and leave them alone for long periods without a problem.

We know now that isn't true. Many

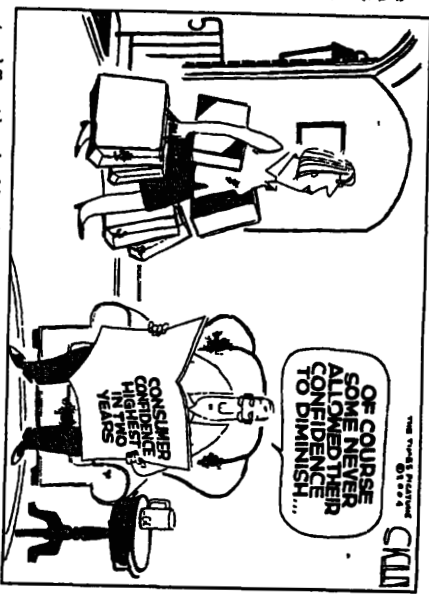
companion birds have the intelligence and emotional range of a 2-year-old. They are flock birds that should never be left alone for any long period. They need stimulation to prevent them from forming bad habits like screaming and **Patkotak**



Unlike dogs and cats, they weren't domesticated thousands of years ago. Most companion birds are barely two generations from their natural habitat, which means their wild instincts are still dominant. And many of the larger birds live 60 to 100 years.

So buying or adopting a companion bird is not something that should be done lightly. You are acquiring a life-long companion. And this is where the people at APEAAC get their reputation. Before you can adopt a bird from them, you have to take three classes that cover the basics of avian care, feeding, behavior and types. That last point is very important.

Different types of birds are as differ-



ent as different breeds of dogs. Some are very loud and vocal. Some like to cuddle. Some want to be your friend from a distance. Some talk. Some whistle. Some mutter.

You have to be prepared to spend time with the bird. Not time where the bird sits in a cage in the same room with you while you do other things. That's a part of each day. You need to devote time with the bird in which he has your undivided attention.

Are birds worth all the hassle? Well, when I first moved to Barrow, I brought my department store parrot, Adelaide, with me. I arrived in Barrow in October and was immediately greeted with a very long, cold and lonely winter. I missed my home, my family, my friends.

As I sat at the table writing long letters to everyone I knew East of the Mississippi describing the total darkness and frigid cold, Adelaide would fly over and land on my shoulder. If I didn't pay attention to her, she'd climb up on my head. If I still didn't stop what I was doing to play with her, she'd leave herself in front of my eyes using my hand for her grip.

If I be in tears, writing home and cry.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Tuesday, July 6, 2004 B-5

BRUCE BABBITT IS UP TO HIS ...

Old tricks

ENVIRONMENTALISTS trotted out former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt last week to attack a proposal by the Bureau of Land Management to take a new look at drilling for oil and gas in the northeast corner of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

Babbitt did as hidden and, according to a news report, "tripped federal officials" for even thinking such a thing. But the fire-and-brimstone news conference left officials in the BLM's office scratching their heads and wondering what Babbitt was talking about.

The former secretary's dander was up because the agency is taking a new look at whether advances in drilling technology and government oversight would allow the oil and gas resources there to be developed while the fish, birds and wildlife are protected.

Opening the area would overturn a decision Babbitt made to keep drillers away from the area, which harbors important bird and wildlife populations at some times of year. But the creatures are not the only natural resources in the northeast corner of NPR-A. Beneath it runs the western portion of the Barrow Arch, a massive geologic structure rich in oil and gas. The arch runs from the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and under Prudhoe Bay to NPR-A.

A BLM spokeswoman said geologists estimate 56 percent of the oil and gas under the Barrow Arch portion of ANWR is within the area Babbitt closed off, perhaps needlessly.

THE 387,000 ACRES proposed to be made available is expected to increase the potential of ANWR's leased acreage from 600 million barrels of recoverable oil to 2.1 billion barrels, which would be a significant boost to the area's proven reserves.

Babbitt says industry should go look elsewhere for oil and gas and he could not care less that doing so would keep the drillers away from the most promising area regardless of whether the wild creatures are really at risk.

The former interior secretary claimed that the BLM also proposes to ease up on its restrictions on industry activities in NPR-A, but agency officials said the restrictions they are considering on things like gravel roads are at least as restrictive as those in a 1986 plan approved by Babbitt himself.

And a limitation on pipeline construction in NPR-A is even more restrictive than the one Babbitt approved. The 1998 plan specified that any pipelines built should have at least a five-foot clearance for caribou. The proposed new restrictions call for a seven-foot caribou clearance — two feet higher — but would allow industry to propose alternatives if there are better ways to facilitate caribou passage.

Babbitt left Alaskans scratching their own heads many times during his tenure as Interior secretary. He often did environmentalists' bidding whether the decisions made sense or not.

Now he is up to his old tricks

Gore deserves a Cheney response

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

I am sure there is a special place in heaven reserved for those who have never used the F-word. I will never get near that place. Nor, apparently, will Dick Cheney.

Washington is abuzz with the latest political contretemps. Cheney, taking of leave at Sea, Pat Leahy's imputation of improper vice presidential conduct regarding Halliburton contracts in Iraq, let the senator know as much during a picture-taking ceremony on the floor of the Senate. The F-word was used. Washington is scandalized.

The newspapers were full of it. Lamentations were heard about the decline of civility. The Post gave special privileges to the occasion, spelling out the full four letters (something that it had done only three times previously). Democrats, feeling damned outraged, demanded apologies. The vice president remained defiant, offering but the coyest concession — that he "probably" cursed — coupled with satisfaction. "I expressed myself rather forcibly, let's let her after I had done it."

The Federal Communications Commission just last year decreed that the F-word could be used as an adjective, but not as a verb. Also, this Solomon verdict, leader for a dozen FUD dissertations, was recently overturned. It would not get Cheney off the hook anyway. By all accounts, he deployed the pungent verb form, in effect a suggestion as to how the good senator from Vermont might amuse himself.

Flood-the-zone coverage by investigative reporters has not, however, quite resolved the issue of which of the two preferred forms passed Cheney's lips — the no-nonsense two-worder — "f---ed" you — or the more expansive three-worder, a director that begins with "go."

Through I myself am partial to the longer version, I admit that each formulation has its virtues. The device is the preferred usage when time is short and the brevity of the essence. Employing the full in emergencies, it is especially useful in the mouths of major league managers going to nose with umpires. They know that they have only a few seconds before



getting tossed out of the game, and as a result television viewers tune far years delighted in the moment the two-worder is hurled, right on camera. No need for sound. The device was made for lip reading.

Which makes it excellent for drive-by information conveyance. When some jerk (Lautner rides my bumper in heavy traffic, honking his horn before passing and cutting me off. I do a turn-to-the-left, eyeball-to-eyeball, through-the-driver's-window two-worder — mouthed slowly and with exaggerated lip movements. No interloctor has yet missed my meaning.

Nonetheless, while the two-worder has the directness of the dagger, the three-worder has the elegance of the wide-eyed saber also. It is more musical and, being more clearly spelled out, more comprehensible to the non-English speaker (a boon in major urban areas). It consists of a straightforward directive containing both a subject and an object — charmingly, the same person.

According to The Post, the local authority on such matters, Cheney went for a variant of the short form, employing the more formal "yourself." And given the location, the floor of the Senate, it seems a reasonable choice. Time was short, and he undoubtedly reserved the right to curse and extend his remarks. Al, by the way, the earnest chamber-pullers are not amused. Cheney's demonstration of earthly authenticity in a chamber in

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Monday, July 5, 2004 B-5

DO INSURANCE COMPANIES DICTATE ...

Public policy?

AS MORE IS known about the settlement of a lawsuit against the Anchorage School District by the family of a young student who attempted to hang himself after being bullied at school, we are left to wonder whether the public interest truly was served.

The Central Middle School eighth-grader suffered brain damage in the 1998 suicide attempt, and his family in 2000 sued for \$33 million to pay for his lifetime care. The district's insurance company, First Specialty Insurance, requested the settlement, School Superintendent Carol Comeau says. It paid \$3.5 million and the district ended up \$1 million.

Comeau readily acknowledges that what happened to the boy is a tragedy, but says she is miffed at the settlement. She says she wanted to go to court, that the case would have been won and the district vindicated. But a contractual agreement with the insurance company put it in the driver's seat.

Then there was the disclosure that there are additional settlements of other cases totaling just slightly less than \$1 million that had not been made public.

While the public flap centers on whether such settlements should be made public, there are other serious issues. Should a private insurance company be able to dictate public policy? How much of the bullying problem at schools springs from the district's zero tolerance approach to violence that seems to make self-defense a punishable offense? Are school officials hamstringing when dealing with chronic troublemakers?

IN DAYS PAST, schoolyard bullies were handled differently. Sometimes kids put on the boxing gloves and settled their differences in the gym under the watchful eye of an adult. Sometimes it was handled in other ways, but it was handled.

Bullies learned quickly that bad things happen to people who behave poorly. Their victims learned they could stand up for themselves. But nowadays even defending yourself from an attacker can lead to a suspension.

While the district is working to temper its zero tolerance policy, it seems to us that those attacked should be free to defend themselves, and teachers and administrators faced with a child who repeatedly bullies, curses, pushes, shoves or is disruptive, should be able to toss him or her out of school on the spot. Period.

The right to an education does not give kids carte blanche to do whatever they want, whenever they want, to anybody they want.

But what makes this settlement most unsettling is that these issues, and others, will not be addressed in court, where a dispassionate examination of the facts likely would shed welcome light.

That is what happens when our school officials must bow to other interests and the public is left in the dark.

Foreign aid is not Africa's answer

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Did you learn that the United States is rich because we have bountiful natural resources? That has to be nonsense. Africa and South America are probably the richest continents in natural resources but are home to the world's most miserably poor people. On the other hand, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and England are poor in natural resources, but their people are among the world's richest.

Maybe your college professor taught that the legacy of colonialism explains Third World poverty. That's nonsense as well. Canada was a colony. So were Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. In fact, the richest country in the world, the United States, was once a colony. By contrast, Ethiopia, Liberia, Tibet, Sudan, Nepal and Bhutan were never colonies, but they are home to the world's poorest people.

There's no complete explanation for why some countries are affluent while others are poor, but there are some leads. Rank countries along a continuum according to whether they are closer to being free-market economies or whether they're closer to socialist or planned economies.

Then, rank countries by per-capita income. We will find a general, not perfect, pattern whereby those countries having a larger free-market sector produce a higher standard of living for their citizens than those at the socialist end of the continuum.

What is more important is that if we ranked countries according to how Freedom House or Amnesty International rates their human-rights guarantees, we'd see that citizens of countries with market economies are not only richer, but they tend to enjoy a greater measure of human-rights protections.

While there is no complete explanation for the correlation between free markets, higher wealth and human-rights protections, the correlation is there.



tems, you can bet the real money that the correlation is not simply coincidental. With but few exceptions, African countries are not free, and most are bankrupt cases. My colleague, John Blundell, director of the London-based Institute of Economic Affairs, highlights some of this in his article "Africa's Plight: Will Not End With Aid" in *The Scotsman* (6/12/04).

Once a food-exporting country, Zimbabwe stands on the brink of starvation just recently. President Robert Mugabe declared that he's going to nationalize all the farmland. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that the consequence will be to exacerbate Zimbabwe's food problems.

Sierra Leone, rich in minerals, especially diamonds, with highly fertile land and home to the best port site in West Africa, has declined into a condition of utter despair. It's a similar story in nearly all of south-of-Sahara Africa. The people are generally worse off now than they were during colonialism both in terms of standard of living and human-rights protections.

John Blundell says that the nations' weaknesses (like farmland) are entirely absent in most of Africa. Africans are not unproductive, they're just like us. Without the rule of law, private property

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BILL J. TOBIN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Sunday, July 4, 2004 #3

DECLARATION SIGNERS PUT ...

Lives on line

WE THINK WE live in troubled times. Death and fear and wars. The future clouded. Lives at risk.

All true. But no reason to lose hope. No cause for panic. No way a time to give up.

Think, instead, what was faced by those who lived 228 years ago. That was when the United States of America was born — a birthday we celebrate today.

Independence Day. A day back then of terrible stress. A day to fear war and rebellion. A day our forefathers put their lives, their honor and their fortunes on the line — signing their names to a document that severed this land's ties with the England of King George.

Their actions behind closed doors at Philadelphia put Americans of the colonies on a perilous course. Nobody could guarantee victory. No one could foresee whether the future held disaster or success. But they put their lives on the line in a belief that being free would be worth the cost, whatever that might be. Today, in a world beset by trouble and peril, other Americans likewise are putting their lives on the line in the cause of freedom.

They face the danger of death in Iraq at the hands of zealous terrorists, but they do so in the knowledge that they are fighting to liberate an oppressed people who have lived long under the hand of an evil and despotic dictator.

THEY DEAL with hardship and the possibility of harm in the wilderness that is Afghanistan, working to free a people who know little but poverty and deprivation — all the while searching for the mastermind of terror who lives like an animal, hidden in a cave or a gully or behind rocks and weeds.

The battles of today are difficult ones. Victory will not be easy. But neither was the victory won by John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Chase, Richard Henry Lee, Francis Lightfoot Lee, John Adams, Benjamin Harrison and the 49 other signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Today, we are blessed by their courage, their vision. Today, we can parade in downtown Anchorage and wave high the red, white and blue of the Stars and Stripes.

Today we celebrate. We do so because these men, and the people they represented, believed the 13 colonies "are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States," as they said in their declaration of freedom.

In support of that, they put their names on a document whose message we honor more than two centuries later. And they said, "We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." Their bravery and vision in troubled times gave the world its greatest democracy. May in the courage of today's Americans also lead to a better world in the years to come.

Hooray for the red, white and blue

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

IT'S GREAT TO HAVE Anchorage once again staging a big-time celebration of Independence Day. For all too many years, in an era now past, the Fourth of July was more of a holiday to go fishing than it was a reason to celebrate the birth of our nation. But in the last three or four years Anchorage has gone all out to raise red, white and blue bunting and to fly the Stars and Stripes. And it's hard to beat a parade on the Fourth — and today's begins at 11:30 this morning, starting at the Town Square on Fifth Avenue, traveling west to K Street, south to North Avenue, then east along the north side of the Delaney Park Strip to E Street.

A THOUSAND OR more volunteers are helping stage today's party. They'll beat the drums and tootle the flutes. They'll march in the parade, ride the floats, fly balloons, and serve a \$5 pancake breakfast in the park that will be offered until 10:30 a.m. The driving force behind the whole affair is Dart Schaff.



Tobin

He runs it, jet speed and has hope is to get every man, woman and child out of the house and downtown for fun and games, music and dancing. On hand will be soldiers and sailors and Marines in uniform, and there will be food and no cold drinks for one and all.

WITHOUT THROWING cold water on the Park Strip party, let's also mention that every political candidate in town probably will be working the crowds, with faithful followers tagging along with signs and banners. Hate to say it, but it's almost too much already — and the primary election doesn't roll around until Aug. 24.

Lawn signs have sprung up like dandelions all over town. And those every-evening-al-dinner-time telephone calls, some with a live person on the line but most of them with a pre-recorded pitch, are enough to



"Did you say on the phone you were in your 20s or born in the 20s?"

make you want to leave the receiver off the hook. And there are still 7 1/2 weeks to go before election day.

CAN'T EVEN hazard a guess about how much money is being spent on this year's U.S. Senate contest, but can tell you that the price has gone up since Alaska first became a state. A day through historic Saturday Sundry columns from the old Anchorage Times numbers an April 24, 1965, report that Bob Bartlett spent only \$5,600 to win his Senate seat in the first statewide election in 1956. For those who may have forgotten, Bartlett, a Democrat, served as Alaska's senior senator until his death in 1968 — opening the way for the appointment of Republican Ted Stevens as his successor. Now 38 years later, Stevens is the ranking GOP member, president pro tem of the Senate, and the third person in line to the presidency, behind the vice president and the speaker of the House.

SPEAKING OF presidential things, let's not let this glorious national holiday pass without mentioning that this coming Saturday will be the 24th anniversary of the day President Jimmy Carter went fishing for Alaska trout in a bubbling stream at Clarence Lake, a 120-mile flight from Elmendorf Air Force Base. Carter and his party, including his Alaska fishing guide, Gov. Jay Hammond, made the trip aboard four Marine helicopters flown here for

the occasion from Washington, D.C. The president caught 24 grayling on the 24th in the waters of what his staffers quickly named "Carter Creek."

OUT OF politics and into bignapper territory, let's up our Fourth of July hat to Dorothy Beaulieu, long-time secretary for the late Bob Award, legendary publisher of the Anchorage Times. Today, as she is known to her host of friends here, celebrated her 92nd birthday on June 25 in Prescott, Ariz., her retirement home for the last 20 years or so. A special salute, too, to Janet Wallinga, one of the smiling experts at Alaska Airlines' city desks office in the Head Captain Cook June 11 was the 30th anniversary of her first day with everybody's favorite airline, a career also begun while still a teen-ager.

REMINDER TIME: The annual Anchorage Symphony Orchestra's Champagne Pops concert will be on stage at the Performing Arts Center on Saturday, Aug. 28 — with pre-dinner suppers beginning at 6:30 p.m. On the agenda the glorious music of George and Ira Gershwin. The Anchorage Chamber's annual Gold Pan awards dinner is billed this year as "The Bear-ug 2006." It will be at the Sheraton on Saturday, Sept. 18, with drinks at 6 o'clock and dinner at 7. You'll need to slip a passport to Bugey to enter the back-room speakers, says the chamber. They'll be packed to the gills with fingerers, slinky molls, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce board members, and deep-cats dressed to the nines. The party is sure to be the cat's pajamas.

SUNDAY PUNDAY: You ask for encoders, you get encoders. Like this William Penn had two sons named Natalie and Ellie known for their handmade mouse pies. They became famous after Quaker's commercial bankers tripled the price of their pastries. To teach the greedy merchants a lesson, Natalie and Ellie put their delectable concoctions on the market at bare cost, and then reduced the price by two cents a day — which quickly became known as the pie rates of Penn's sons.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Saturday, July 3, 2004 B-5 (f)

WOULD YOU SAY IT'S A CASE OF ...

Favoritism?

IT IS NOTHING short of amazing how very similar news can be played so differently in the media. It is the kind of thing that surely must make the average reader or viewer wonder whether bias has a role.

Take, for instance, the Daily News' stories about U.S. Senators and a similar story detailing endorsements of incumbent Sen. Lisa Murkowski for their respective primary elections in August.

"GOP heavy hitters back Mike Miller," said the sizable headline just below the fold on the June 25 Alaska page. It was accompanied by a three-line subhead naming those who have thrown in with Miller. The prominently played story started on B-1 and jumped inside to B-7. The bylined story was 376 words long.

Thursday, the News printed a virtually identical story about Murkowski's endorsements. Surely, you are thinking, it was on the Alaska page. With a respectable headline. And a three-line subhead. Guess again.

The 121-word brief "was buried in the 'Alaska Digest' on page B-3. It was the third item mentioned, just beneath two small stories, one about a protest whose customer demanded his money back and the other reporting a fatal head-on collision in Missouri.

In small type, the two-line headline said, "Past and present state GOP leaders back Lisa Murkowski's Senate run." Nothing about "heavy hitters," although the list of endorsements reads like a "Who's Who" of Alaska Republicans. And there was no three-line subhead mentioning names. No byline, either.

Quite a difference in coverage and placement. It cannot help but make you wonder.

Masked cowards

THOSE IRAQI militants who behead innocent prisoners are evil murderers of the worst order — and cowards, as well.

How ironic it is that they stand, waving weapons on high as though they are brave fighters — all the while hiding their faces behind garments wrapped around their heads, showing only their eyes.

They scream hatred for America. But they are afraid to face a world of civilized people. They fear to be known, fear to be seen, fear that decent people might know who they are.

They are brutal. They are heartless. But they are not warriors. Call them pitiful. Hiding behind masks. Fearful that one day the world will look them face to face — and make them pay.

Letters to The Times

Elise gives relief

I've decided that I'm really past due letting Elise Patrick know how much I enjoy her articles in The Voice of the Times. I've lived in Anchorage more than 36 years now and can relate to a lot of her wonderful messages about our state.

I'm not given to writing fan letters, however. I just wanted to say that I look forward to Elise's column in a world where the daily news can be almost overwhelmingly sad, her articles are a welcome smile of relief with a sensible positive spin on the day.

Cynthia Penickson
Anchorage

Americans can ask questions

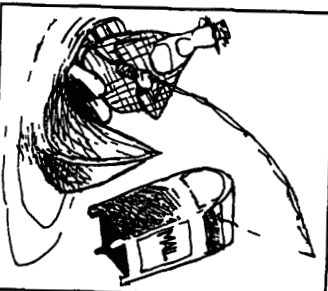
Your June 11 editorial, "A prayer for battle," was critical of many of us who are concerned with the increasing religiosity of our government policies but who respect and defend the rights of society to follow our separate spiritual paths as we go about our daily business.

Let's add messages to the troops to Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking. I don't see how a noble live-audience prayer led by a government official, a cheap shot, editor, to link patriotism and religion. Cloaking the flag in clerical garments or vice-versa ultimately translates the negatives of the weaker cause into the stronger of the detriment of both.

The editor's comment, "Nobody went to court, thank God, to try to force Eisenhower to withdraw or amend his message" seems to imply that the outcome might have been different without whatever individual prayers the message may have generated. Who knows?

Questionable governmental actions are being challenged regularly (school prayers, religious displays, the pledge) in the American way. Am I a second-class veteran for serving in that war under a non-religious pledge?

Separation of church and state may not be the optimum solution to the current clash of world cultures but it seems



the best interpretation of the Constitution's freedom of religion concept at this stage of social development.

President, Alaska Chapter
Americans United for Separation of Church and State

A great patriot

After reading some of the various letters published in the Anchorage Daily News regarding the passing of Ronald Wilson Reagan, I felt that I should respond with something a bit more positive.

Whether one agrees or not with his political beliefs and actions, it cannot be disputed that this man was a great president and a great man. What can be said, by anyone that has taken the time to hear his story, and read his words, is that this is the passing of a great American patriot.

When Ronald Reagan was elected, the heart in this great country was at an all-time low. Within his two terms, he was able not only to bring together the American peoples with a renewed sense of optimism and patriotism, but to also bring forth his conviction that communism was not only the wrong way, but the antithesis of all that free men should represent. The "wall" came down for a reason, and it was Ronald Reagan that led the way.

To those who complain about "pr-

vide liberties," the Iran-Contra affair, and "Reaganomics," allow me to say this: Nothing, and I mean nothing, without the foremost thought of bettering the United States of America. And in my humble opinion, what this noble American did was nothing short of miracles.

Randy Lee Hartman
Anchorage

Questions value of seniority

This letter is in response to your editorial on June 25, "Knowles an old codger in Senate years." If seniority is so important in the United States Senate, why did Frank Murkowski leave? I do not recall any of your editorial criticizing him for leaving the Senate.

In general, your editorial speaks against the entire democratic process. If Alaskans are to keep electing the same U.S. senator every six years, what is the point of having elections? Are you in favor of appointing U.S. senators for life?

You are suggesting that no one dare run against an incumbent senator regardless of his or her effectiveness. Your ideas sound more like royalty than democracy. Are you also advocating that incumbent senators appoint their successors? Again, why bother with asking the voters for their opinion?

Margaret Anderson
Homer

Wants better reason

Since when does time in office take precedence over competency to determine who should be the next elected senator?

To say that Lisa Murkowski would be "a chair of a committee" in 20 years if she were elected three times implies that the voters have no choice in the matter.

To be elected even once, she would have to show some reason for the voters doing so, some reason other than "I was born here."

Donald C Pascoe
Anchorage

The Anchorage Times

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FOREST SERVICE STICKS BY ...

Chugach plan

THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE deserves applause for its refusal to cave in to environmentalist demands to set aside more of the Chugach National Forest as wilderness. The green militants objected to a 2002 management plan for the Chugach, which contained generous conservation set-asides. Their big complaint was that the plan set aside only 1.4 million acres of the 5 million-acre forest as inviolate wilderness. Imagine that, only 1.4 million acres.

The balance of the forest is reserved for wildlife habitat and human use, primarily recreational, with limited provisions for resource development activities such as commercial fishing, logging of beetle-killed trees along existing road corridors and small placer mines.

Making the wilderness area official would require that it be approved first by Congress. That's because of the no-more clause of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. That act set aside more than 100 million acres — almost a third of Alaska's land area — as parks, monuments, wilderness and refuges.

The greens were furious about the Forest Service's latest decision, but those who wanted access for snowmobiles and helicopters, and minimal resource development, thought the Forest Service people did a very balanced job.

BALANCE IS not what greens want, of course. They also want government decisions that might help Alaska grow and its people to prosper.

Acting Chugach Forest supervisor Chuck Frey said his agency tried to strike a balance between the two interests. "There's just such strong feelings on both sides," he said. The passion is no surprise since the Chugach Forest is in Anchorage's backyard and designating it all as wilderness would keep out virtually everybody except backpackers and, in some areas, canoeists.

Alaska's natural beauty, its parks, refuges and wilderness areas are among the many things that make this state great. They are what brought many of us here and what keeps us here. But, for most people, staying in Alaska requires a job and a growing economy.

Deciding which areas will be retained in their pristine state — and which will be available for human use — requires juggling the needs of people as well as wild creatures. Those interests sometimes conflict, and resolving the conflicts is what resource management is all about.

The Forest Service had to withstand substantial pressure from the extremists to stick with its 2002 plan, which was developed after a lot of hard and thoughtful work.

David Owens, executive director of the Resource Development Council, said his group didn't get all it asked for but he felt the Forest Service did a good job of striking a compromise. "They lived up to their promise to preserve the forest's wild character," he said. "Ten years from now, people aren't going to see much difference on the forest."

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Fat-face and pals push their luck

By PAUL JENKINS

Every now and then, I am frustrated at being a law-abiding member of society, someone who refuses to take the law into his own hands, someone with an abiding sense of right and wrong. In common parlance, a sucker.

At those times, when it is clear there is justice only for jets and criminals, I find a Walter Mittyish comfort in H. L. Menckens' line, "Every normal man must be tempted at times to spit on his hands, hoist the black flag, and begin slitting throats." Wouldn't that be satisfying? I ask myself.

I was sorely tempted last weekend when four young lawlives nearly killed my wife and me.

We were riding our motorcycle, doing the speed limit, mudding you, on the two-lane portion of the old Glenn Highway and downtown Eagle River when a filthy, four-door, silver-blue Geo Prizm came rocketing up from behind.

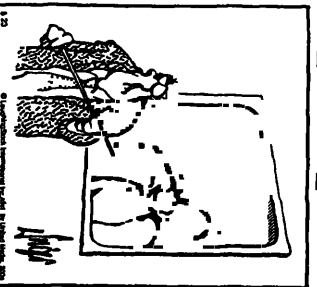
After nearly being run down from behind last year on an Oregon highway by a moron who was either drunk or Jenkins



dragged, I am nervous about being followed closely enough that I can count dead bugs on a car's grill in my rear-view mirror.

The Geo would zoom up close enough to scuff the wax on my rear fender, then drop back a few feet and run up again. If there had been a place to get out of its way, I would have done just that in the interest of staying alive, but there was none. Finally, ignoring double yellow lines, the driver passed. A fat-faced punk in the front passenger seat, who looked to be 16, was red-faced, shouting profanity at the top of his lungs and making obscene gestures, proving beyond doubt that while trash is still having kids. Then, he threw something whatever it was, it hit my windshield and bounced off. That is a serious crime in many states.

The driver cut me off, accelerated enough. There was the car. And there



"And now for a look at the latest picture from our weather satellite."

and rode the rear fender of my wife's bike until she got to a passing lane and could get out of his path. She reversed the same obscenities and gestures. Real tough guys.

I likely would have written it off as just another bunch of feral kids shielded by Alaska's punk-protection law — except that when fat-face threw something he went over the line.

In Eagle River, I passed them with the intent of stopping and chewing them out at the next red light. They went around and headed for an area frequented by kids. I saw a cop. I waved. He waved. I pointed to a gas station parking lot. He nodded and drove on. The cell phone popped out. I called again. A few minutes later and told the story. "Did I have a license tag number? No, but I gave the best description of the car that I could. And if you happen to find them, you can go ahead and shoot them, I said, promising that I would not complain. Well, the dispatcher said, a little flustered, we'll send out a description of the car. Right, I thought.

After getting home, we decided to take a look in a parking lot behind the town square, where nowadays too many unsupervised kids hang out. Maybe we could get a license tag number. Sure enough. There was the car. And there

was the driver, along with the fat-faced kid, and the other boy and a girl who were also in the car. They were sitting there on swings, giving us the owl eye and acting nervous, then tough, then nervous.

In the old days, before I became civilized, there is no telling what I would have done. But this is now and the notion of prison really does keep me from acting on my impulses. Like a dummy, I call the cops again.

Here they are, I said, all of them, including the one who tossed something at me. Here is the car. Here is the license tag number, I told the dispatcher. Here is what they are wearing. Here is what they look like. You bet. I'll file charges. We wait. Nothing. We leave, driving a few blocks away. We pulled into a parking lot to see how long it would take the kids to high-tail it. Thirty seconds later, the car was off like a shot. I gave up.

On the way home, by the way, I noted two police cars sitting in a restaurant parking lot about three blocks away. Needless to say, nobody from the department has called me.

These sorry examples of today's youth are lucky. First, they did not hurt my wife or me. Second, the cops seemingly could not have cared less, although it occurs to me that people who, in a rage, throw something at a moving motorcycle or cut it off intentionally, are potential killers. Third, it was me they did it to and not some meth-soaked monster who would have followed them and killed the fat-faced kid first, and then the rest of them. These folks are out there believe me. I have seen them. I have talked to them.

What fat-face and his pals need to know is that people like me resist the temptation to hoist the black flag, not because we shrink from dealing with them harshly as they should be dealt with, but because we believe in an orderly and lawful society. We understand that just because we can do something does not mean that we should. But they should learn not to push their luck — because things can change.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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MUCH ADO ABOUT . . .

Mine rating

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL Protection Agency issued its annual toxics release inventory last week and the greens are all a flap. Both events were predictable and neither one is anything to worry about.

The excitement — to the extent there was any — centered on the fact that the Red Dog zinc and lead mine near Kotzebue is listed first on the EPA's register of toxics releasers.

That sounds ominous until you realize it does not mean that Red Dog is polluting the air or the water. It simply means that the mine operators excavated rock containing the metals and moved it from below ground to the surface, where concentrates were extruded for shipment to world markets. That's what such mines are supposed to do.

Red Dog is a joint venture of NANA Regional Corp. and Teck Cominco, a Canadian mining company. It is the largest employer in the Kotzebue area and provides 6 percent of the world's zinc supply.

And it's only because the EPA uses a weird rating system that Red Dog is listed anywhere near the top. The mine contains high-grade ore and is first among the nation's high-grade operations, its output ranks it as the largest zinc mine in the world.

THE LISTING is in some respects deceptive since EPA's list does not include low-grade ore operations, some of which involve much larger volumes of waste rock. If they were included, Red Dog would be ranked 46th in the nation.

In her annual media interviews on the subject, environmentalist Pamela Miller charged that metals in the waste rock piles might potentially leak acid runoff into surface and ground water. Miller is executive director of Alaska Community Action on Toxics.

Miller said she has no information that the waste rock piles are leaching acid runoff now, but worries that they might in the future, perhaps after the mine is shut down in 40 years or so. She ignores the fact that the operation is demonstrably clean now, is closely monitored by its Alaska Native owners and state and federal environmental watchdog agencies, and that the mine operators will be forced to meet strict regulations for reclaiming the site when it is eventually shut down.

She claims that the mine is loosely regulated, but her accusations are not supported by the facts.

As evidence that the mine is not leaching metals into the land and waters, the operators note that Red Dog Creek is now cleaner than before operations began. Where the creek was once made sterile by naturally leaching acids, it was rerouted past the ore deposit. Discharge waters from the mine are treated before being released and the creek now supports a thriving population of Dolly Varden.

Red Dog Mine is a clean operation and those involved can prove it.

Enforcing law helps solve panhandling

By DAN SULLIVAN

Last year, I introduced legislation to clarify the municipality's ordinance governing solicitation in the roadway (the fancy term for panhandling). The ordinance passed and accomplished two things.

First, it made it very clear that the act of either being in the roadway or leaving the sidewalk to collect money from someone in the roadway constituted a violation. This clarification was necessary because judges were rejecting citations issued under the old language. Second, the ordinance included a new provision that also made it a violation for a driver to rent a panhandler into the roadway to rent a donation.

Summer weather has brought the panhandling crowd out in full force and so once again there is attention being directed toward the issue, this time by the mayor and the Downtown Partnership.

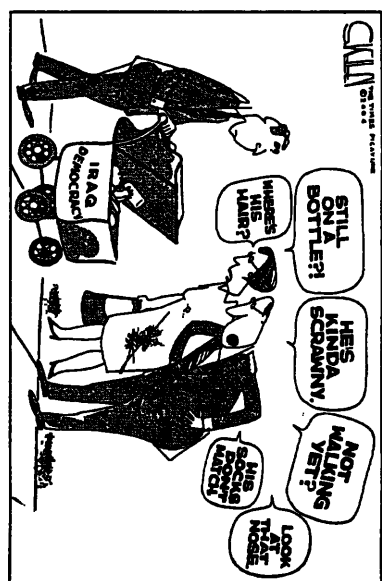
While I was disappointed not to see more immediate action after the passage of the panhandling ordinance last year, I am encouraged to see the issue now being addressed. I am hopeful that the developing policy will be more than discussion and instead be action-oriented with measurable results.

Street corner donations, however well intentioned, invariably lead to an alcohol purchase. An education campaign is needed, encouraging the public not to give money to panhandlers, but instead urging contributions to social service agencies such as the Salvation Army, Homeward Bound, Bean's Cafe, etc.

This strategy was part of the discussion last year, and the mayor's new "Change for the Better" program will implement such a campaign as part of a long-range solution. These agencies have the expertise to actually help the homeless and the public unstable panhandlers. They can always use more resources to accomplish their mission, and



Sullivan



the more that this comes from reduced private donations, the better. However, an education campaign by itself will not get the job done. Cities that have effectively dealt with panhandling and its related social ills have, since simply, enforced the laws against these activities.

If the person committing the violation cannot pay the required fine, they are entered into one of the programs that can help them. In the alternative, if we make it easy to exist through begging on the street corners, it is an activity that will continue to grow. A little enforcement goes a long way within the known and limited group of local panhandlers and it is worth the resource cost.

Some have suggested that this issue should not be a law enforcement matter, but that it should be left solely to the social service agencies. That is essentially what has been happening for the last decade or so and we are starting to see diminishing returns.

I am receiving more complaints than ever, particularly regarding increasingly aggressive panhandling. This includes swearing at non-contributors, following people and continuing the request for money after being told no, panhandling in groups, camping out in business doorways, and other unbecoming behaviors.

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I have recently introduced a new panhandling ordinance to clarify that these are not legal activities. If the Borough administration does decide to increase enforcement, the legal tools should be available to get the job done.

I am also urging the organized non-profit fund-raising groups to comply with municipal law and obtain the special activities permit necessary to legally conduct fund raising in the roadway against the down-and-out panhandler but turn a blind eye when the same activity is conducted by non-profits. The traffic department's special activities permit includes a \$1 million general liability insurance requirement with an additional \$1 million for the MOA. This is particularly important as some roadway fund-raising events involve on-duty municipal employees.

My vision of Anchorage as an All America City does not include vagrants panhandling in the roadways. I look forward to working with the administration on a policy that includes education, support of effective social service agencies and enforcement of the law as the key elements.

Dan Sullivan represents West Anchorage on the Anchorage Assembly.

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AUDUBON E-MAIL CONTAINS ...

Major errors

THE NATIONAL AUDUBON Society has sent out a plea for its supporters to show up at a July 1 hearing in Washington, D.C., on a federal proposal to open new areas of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska to oil drilling.

The plea was contained in a widely distributed e-mail message and warned of dire consequences of all kinds if drilling is allowed in "Alaska's Western Arctic."

Only problem is the e-mail message was filled with inaccurate and exaggerated information and did not mention the name of the reserve or the fact that the land in question is within an area designated for oil and gas exploration and development.

Because of the e-mail's wording — and Audubon's failure to mention that the land is inside NPR-A — the inescapable conclusion many of its recipients will reach is that the hearing is about opening the coastal plan of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. That, of course, is already the subject of much environmental hysteria and false communication.

BUT THE July 1 hearing is on a proposal by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to open another 367,000 acres of NPR-A to oil and gas leasing in the 23 million-acre petroleum reserve. BLM estimates that the lease offering — when added to the 2.9 million acres already under lease — could increase potential NPR-A production from its present estimated level of 600 million barrels to 2.1 billion barrels.

Audubon warns that "The Bush administration has unveiled a new plan to open millions of acres of unique and critical bird and wildlife habitat to oil and gas development in Alaska's Western Arctic. These actions could wipe out vast areas of vital habitat for ducks, geese, and other migratory birds, as well as caribou, wolves, grizzly bears, belugas, whales and seals."

Actually the area proposed for leasing does contain some sensitive waterfowl and wildlife habitat, which can and should be protected while exploration proceeds. The birds and animals there are important to the area's subsistence hunters, among others.

But the proposed leasing area is far smaller than the Audubon e-mail claims, it includes some acreage along NPR-A's Beaufort Sea shoreline but none of the leases offered would be offshore, so impact on whales and seals is unlikely.

Stan Semner, executive director of the Alaska chapter of Audubon, declined to comment on the e-mail. He said he heard it was in the works but had never seen it. Too bad, the national office might have received some useful suggestions by checking with its Alaska affiliate on an Alaska issue.

Mentioning that the area in question is within a national petroleum reserve would have been a good place to start.

Western world in war of survival

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

The Muslim world is at war with Western civilization. We have the military might to thwart them. The question is: Do we have the intelligence to recognize the attack and the will to defend ourselves from annihilation? Their intent is clear, but let's refresh our memories with a bit of history.

At the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, several athletes were massacred. In 1979, the U.S. embassy in Tehran was taken over and 52 hostages held for more than a year. In 1983, U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut were blown up, killing 241 U.S. soldiers. In 1988, Pan Am flight 103 was bombed, killing 270 people. In 1993, there was the first bombing of the World Trade Center, and in 2001, it was reduced to rubble, killing more than 3,000 Americans.

In 1998, U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed, resulting in more than 200 dead and 4,000 injured. Who are the people responsible for these and other



Williams

wanton murders of innocents, including the recent barbaric beheading of two innocent men? They were all Muslims.

You say, "Williams, you can't make an indictment of a whole people and their religion." I'm not, and let me clearly state: By no means are all Muslims murderers. But on the other hand, I've never heard broad Muslim condemnation of their fellow Muslims' murderous acts committed in the name of their God.

If anything, there has been jubilation and dancing in the streets in the wake of Muslim attacks on Westerners. Contrast their response to the widespread Western condemnation of the mild but unambiguous behavior of a few coalition forces in Iraq's Abu Ghurab prison.

Muslim atrocities, and the collective Muslim response to those atrocities, might be better understood knowing their belief system as spelled out by a



few, among many, passages from the Quran. "Fight those who do not believe in Allah" (Surat Al-Taubah 9:29). "I will instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers. Smite ye above their heads and smite all their finger tips of them" (Quran 8:12). "The unbelievers among the People of the Book and the pagans shall burn forever in the fire of Hell. They are the vilest of all creatures" (Quran 96:1-6). "Fight against those who believe not in Allah, and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth (Islam), until they are subdued" (Surat Al-Taubah 9:29).

Phil Lucas, editor of the Panama City, Fla., News Herald, in his April 4, 2004, editorial "Up Against Fanaticism," asks, "Can anybody name three ongoing world conflicts in which Muslims are not involved?" Lucas says, "They can't get along with their neighbors on such far-flung places as France, Chechnya, Bosnia, Indonesia, Spain, Morocco, India, Tunisia, Somalia, etc., etc., etc."

My colleague Dr. Thomas Sowell observes, "Those in the Islamic world have for centuries been taught to regard themselves as far superior to the 'infidels' of the West, while everything they

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

REVOLUTION COMING IN . . .

Viewing habits

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES are under way in the entertainment industry. And for the most part, they look like good ones.

Among other things, television recording devices like TiVo will allow audiences to record their favorite programs automatically, watch them at their leisure and fast-forward through commercials.

And TiVo is now preparing to allow customers to download movies from the Internet. The next likely step is for movie producers to offer their first-run products on a pay-per-view basis.

When that happens, as seems likely, it will be possible to watch newly released top-of-the-line movies on a large-screen television in your own living room.

And that will bring unprecedented changes like the ability to watch movies at home that you might not bother with if you had to devote an evening and a trip to a theater.

That will, in turn, revolutionize the economics of movie-making. It will allow producers to market their products to audiences they otherwise might never reach. That will occur because a viewer could pay a few dollars to see if the movie lived up to its hype, if not, he or she could put another program on, read a book or walk the dog.

Those immense changes will be enabled by the advent of one little gadget and its imitators. What else might be coming is difficult to imagine.

We're not alone

IF IT'S ANY consolation, be advised that the Illinois Legislature went back into special session on Thursday to — no surprise — act on a budget problem.

There are some differences between Springfield and Joliet. The big one is that Illinois has no spending plan at all for what happens when the new budget year begins July 1.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich is looking for an increase in state spending of \$1 billion, but the House and Senate haven't agreed on how to get there.

The Illinois lawmakers have been in adjournment since May 31, when their regular session ended — along with their \$85-a-day expense allocation.

They'll go back in special session and get no daily expense payment.

Blagojevich said the session will continue "until our work is done."

Without any expense checks coming in, the prospect is the work will be wrapped up sooner rather than later.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Two days of bringing Alaskans together

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

A MAJOR TWO-DAY conference opens here tomorrow, under the sponsorship of the Alaska Federation of Natives, with big roles being played by the Denali Commission, the Harvard University Center for International Development, and representatives from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. How's that for some big-time collaboration? The sessions at the Hotel Captain Cook are billed as a leadership forum focusing on "Building Knowledge-based Economies." Credit Julie Kiska, the dedicated president of the AFN, for pulling together this huge project. One goal is to discuss ways to increase private sector opportunities and new jobs. Another is to increase the presence of Natives as partners in the private sector. Worley stuff indeed, in Alaska's 49th year as the 49th State.

ON WEDNESDAY, ground-breaking ceremonies will mark the start of construction for a new Brother Francis Shelter. All told, it will be a \$5.2 million project — with the hope of raising an additional \$2 million for an endowment to cover future maintenance needs over the anticipated 40-year life of the new facility. The first \$4.2 million of the cost already has been raised from Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Health and Social Services, Cook Inlet Housing Authority, the Kasamson Foundation and private gifts. Jewel Jones, with a heart as big as Anchorage in dozens of different civic activities in which she has been engaged, is the fund drive chairman. The shelter, in its long-outlived present quarters on First Avenue, has been serving Anchorage's homeless population for a quarter of a century. The groundbreaking is scheduled at 2 p.m. behind the existing facility — which will continue to be used by — which will continue to be used by —



Tobin

"Come on. You were all excited when you saw it on TV."



At the new shelter is ready. Exterior construction is expected to be completed in November, with the interior outfitted and ready by next spring.

ELSEWHERE ON THE fund-raising front, banker Marc Laingland heads a blue-ribbon-type committee seeking before the end of next year \$12 million for the University of Alaska Anchorage. Of that, \$7.4 million already has been pledged. The money will be used to finance student scholarships, faculty research and teaching activities, and campus improvements.

ON THE MAP: Two faithful residents have responded to the call for distressed nations from the WPA, Wild West — in this case, especially in Alaska. David Williams of Fairbanks swears there really is a Yellow Stone Road up his way, just a few miles down Badolosa Road. Clear to home, Natalie Brooks says there are two streets near her neighborhood in Chugiak that live up to their names: Helluva Road and Four Wheel Drive. Good enough. But be advised that other submissions are still being accepted.

NOT MUCH WAS made hereabouts earlier this month to mark the 62nd anniversary of the Japanese raids on Dutch Harbor in the early months of World War II. So let's take a minute for a nod to history, and remind today's Alaskans that war first came to the Aleutians when swarms of Japanese Zeros

stroked the Dutch Harbor Naval Base and the nearby Fort Meares Army post on June 3, 1942. A second raid came the following day. American deaths included 33 soldiers, 8 sailors, 1 Marine and 1 civilian. Eleven U.S. planes were lost. Ten Japanese attack planes were destroyed and 15 Japanese pilots were killed. The bombing was memorialized on a 29-cent U.S. postage stamp issued in 1992 as part of a Postal Service commemoration of the 50th anniversary of World War II. The Aleutian stamp depicted smoke rising above Fort Meares' bombarded barracks.

ELSEWHERE IN history, we're coming up on the 40th anniversary of the first time Anchorage television viewers were able to see network news on the same day as the rest of the nation. Not live, mind you — and not at the same time as folks Outside. But at least on the same day. It was on Sept. 26, 1964, that KNNI-TV — which many years later morphed into KTUU — began copying the Humbley-Brinkley network newsfeed in Seattle at 6 p.m. and flying the tapes to Anchorage for airing at 11 o'clock here. We've come a long way, baby. Or, to put it in historical terms, "Good night, Chee." "Good night, David."

JUST BEFORE Brig. Gen. Marla F. Gibson moved a couple of months ago to Eielson Air Force Base to take command of the 354th Fighter Wing, he was head of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Balad Air Force Base, Iraq. Nearly 6,000 people were in his command, which included the 47th Air Expeditionary Group at Tallil Air Base, the 506th Air Expeditionary Group at Kirkuk Air Base, and the 447th Air Expeditionary Group at Baghdad International Airport. He also worked closely with coalition forces from Australia, England, Estonia, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Romania and South Korea. Gen. Gibson, a 1978 Air Force Academy graduate, previously served overseas in South Korea, England, Saudi Arabia, and Southwest Asia. All of which, for sure, should make getting along in Fairbanks a piece of cake.

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The Anchorage Times

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Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Saturday June 26 2004 B-7

LEGISLATURE DROPPED BALL ON ...

POMV issue

THE LEGISLATURE has adjourned once again without taking action on a long-term solution to the state's fiscal gap.

That was disappointing, if unsurprising. Few legislators wanted to tackle the issue in an election year, especially since increasing state revenues, boosted by high crude oil prices, have pushed back the urgency of the fiscal dilemma — for the time being.

Though legislators did pass a phased-in \$1-per-pack cigarette tax, their brief special session was disappointing because they failed to approve a ballot measure that would convert the Alaska Permanent Fund to an endowment and mandate using a percent-of-market-value method for determining payouts.

That measure, called POMV, would have limited draws on the fund to 5 percent of its total value. It would have made inflation-proofing of the fund automatic.

POMV would also have protected the fund from potential raids by the Legislature in years when the earnings account is fat. And it would encourage fund trustees to retain good investments and reduce the temptation to sell them just to replenish the earnings pool and make money available for state use.

BY LAW only realized earnings can be used for public spending, including dividends. That means investments must be sold or cashed in before their gains can be counted as real earnings and moved to the earnings account.

Since the best use of good investments is often to hold on to them and let them grow, the existing system creates motivation for the fund trustees to unload investments they might prefer to keep in their portfolio.

By itself, POMV is a good idea and probably not controversial. But the issue was fatally complicated by argument over how the 5 percent would be used. The quibblers were over how much of that money would go for dividends and how much for state expenses.

Gov. Frank Murkowski wanted the POMV issue on the ballot this November. That now seems impossible — and that's the bad news.

The good news is that Murkowski and the Legislature have helped move the issue to center stage in Alaska politics and increased public understanding.

That could lay the groundwork for future resolution of the fiscal gap and for use of a portion of Permanent Fund earnings to pay state expenses. In the past, using earnings for anything but dividends has not been necessary because the Constitutional Budget Reserve has filled the gap each year, but the bottom of that cash pool is in sight.

Closing the fiscal gap and paving the way for a stable financial future has been a high priority for many state leaders for many years. Solving the problem has taken a long time, too long.

Let's hope it's getting closer.

No more proms shrouded in blackness

By LEW M. WILLIAMS JR.

The July Fourth celebration next weekend reminds us of freedoms enjoyed in America and of the sacrifices of those protecting those freedoms.

Alaskans have been especially lucky in the past two months welcoming summer with beautiful spring weather. We enjoy outdoor activities and end-of-school activities, with proms providing memories for a lifetime.

The biggest problem for \$30,000 Alaskans is how to manage a \$28 billion reserve that grows with every gallon of crude oil pumped. We see no problems for Alaskans. We see opportunities, thanks to living in America.

Parents and grandparents who smiled at recent graduates really were smiling at memories of their own proms and commencement. Great-grandparents remember proms in the

blackout era when the world ignored an earlier terrorist threat until it was almost too late. At that time, girls kissed the boys goodbye. Some of the girls left, too. Today, young Americans who

enjoyed proms only a few years ago are assuring that terrorists don't again shroud proms in a blackout.

Last month, Americans recognized the supreme sacrifices of earlier generations who beat world terrorists. The World War II Memorial was dedicated May 29 in Washington, D.C. Memorial Day was observed solemnly May 31. On June 6 in France, the 60th anniversary of D-Day was observed near 9,000 crosses marking the final resting place of young Americans and their allies. They died securing the beachhead for taking Europe back from the darkness of Nazi tyranny and terror.

Former President Ronald Reagan died two days before the June 6 dedication. His death raised the level of patriotism among Americans who remember that his policies won the Cold War against Communism ("Cold War" it

was pretty hot for those who fought in Russia and Vietnam.) Reagan's appeal to Russia, Premier Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this wall" separating East and West Germany as a historical declaration of Communism's capitulation.

President George W. Bush directs a new world war, the War on Terrorism, precipitated by 20 years of terror attacks culminating with the loss of 3,000 lives on Sept. 11, 2001. Bush is assailed by critics, as was Reagan. Bush must rally people to win this war, as Reagan and the Korean and Vietnam wars won the Cold War, and as great-grandparents won World War II. The enemy is clearly identified — masked cowards heading and burning innocent civilians, reminiscent of Nazi and Imperial Japanese atrocities.

Our major media, running pictures of naked Iraqi prisoners guarded by U.S. troops, complain that the prisoners were humiliated to the point of torture. How does that compare to the photo last week on Arab television of the body of American Robert Anderson lying on his stomach, his severed head sitting in the middle of his back?

What does it take to convince some Americans that we are at war, a war we cannot lose? We must not abandon the Middle East to barbarians who seek to turn the clock back to the dark ages. Would



"People are beginning to complain about too much violence on cave walls."

giving them the Middle East even keep them from our shores? They say not. It is ironic that the Germans, the French and some in England are opposed to Bush's policies in the War on Terror. Don't they remember the price of appeasing barbarians? Americans responded actively 63 years ago, finally convinced by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that evil sought to enslave the world.

It hasn't. The world out again in the Cold War. Now the United States is leading the effort to save Europe, Japan, China, India — all of the countries dependent upon Middle East oil. How important is winning the war against terrorists headquartered in the Middle East?

The United States imports from the Middle East only 11 percent of its daily demand. Most U.S. imports, 70 percent, come from the Western Hemisphere. Increased western production and conservation can offset that 13.7 percent.

But in Europe, 42 percent of its oil imports are from the Middle East. For Japan, 75 percent of its oil is from the Middle East. Other nations, recovering from dictatorial years shied during the Cold War, need increasing amounts of oil.

It is understandable that many foreign countries and their people dislike Americans. America is a nation of immigrants whose barbarians came from every country in the world seeking freedom from dictators — religious, cultural, military, socialist, communist. Those immigrants performed the miracle of converting a relatively virgin land into the dominant and freest nation in the world in the historically short time of 228 years.

Naturally, those left in the Old Country are critical and envious. Some still live under a cultural yoke from the Dark Ages. Many still look to America. The planes fly both ways. They are not loaded with people — even critics of America or President Bush — flying back.

So this July Fourth as the flag goes by, give a salute and add a prayer of thanks to our forebears and to today's protectors. Be proud of America. We will win this one, too, without again shrouding proms in a blackout.

Lew Williams Jr. is a retired publisher of the Kenai Peninsula Daily News. His e-mail is lmw@worldnet.att.net.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Friday, June 25, 2004 B-5

LIKE IT OR NOT, WE ARE . . .

At war

LET'S REFRESH our collective memory. The United States is at war.

It is not a war that we began. It is not a war any American wanted. But we were plunged into this war by attacks on American institutions and citizens in other places in the world, and most violently here at home by the deadly assaults of Sept. 11, 2001. More than 3,000 innocent people died on that bloody day.

We are now warned that those who perpetuated those previous attacks are preparing to strike again — to make what is being called a "hard hit" at one or more places in the U.S. this summer or this fall.

There is no reason to doubt these intelligence estimates by national security officials. Yet some Americans want to turn their backs on reality, saying that by giving in — by surrendering to terrorism — peace once again will return to our land and the peril of death from al Qaeda zealots will pass away.

Would that this could be so. But it is a hope held only in dreamland.

THE FANATICS in Afghanistan, where Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda killers are based, as well as those in Iraq and elsewhere, are committed to bring death and destruction to America and to Americans.

Credible intelligence information, gathered from several sources, indicates attacks are being planned in connection with major national events — Fourth of July celebrations and the Republican and Democratic national conventions, for instance.

These warnings come amid reports that there are about 18,000 al Qaeda fighters trained and ready to carry out terrorist attacks on the U.S. and the people of this country.

Not very comforting.

The federal effort proceeds to fend off such attacks and to apprehend any terrorists already here or en route before they can cause murder and mayhem again. Unfortunately, however, we can't close our eyes to dire possibilities.

We are at war, and our enemies are not dressed in the uniform of soldiers and living by the rules of the Geneva Convention. These are people who cut off the heads of those they capture, and display the grisly results on the Internet and on television.

They express outrage at actions by a few U.S. soldiers in an Iraq prison, but cheer the brutal murders of those they hold hostage.

You and your loved ones, here and elsewhere in the U.S. and overseas, are their targets.

This, sadly, is reality. Respect it at your own risk.

Knowles an old coot in Senate years

By PAUL JENKINS

Let's get this out of the way. If Tony Knowles somehow were to win his race for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Lisa Murkowski, Alaska would lose — and big. He is just too old.

Like other states, Alaska depends on the seniority of its congressional delegation, especially its senators, for political clout — political clout to advance needed state projects and interests. You will not find many important committees headed by junior senators or representatives. Longevity equals power, power is what gets things done.

Yes, I suppose a brilliant, lucky young senator could capture the popular imagination and carve out a niche of sorts in the Senate culture, but slowly accumulated seniority — the absolute base of the young and driven — is the currency of power. Without it, the brightest young political stars are little more than Roman candles.

Longevity trumps brains and desire in politics and government. Without it, aspirants to greatness can only wait, biding their time, learning their craft, awaiting their day. There is no shortcut.



SEN. TONY KNOWLES

For Knowles, at 61, time is the enemy. He is just too old for Alaska's good. That does not mean he isn't a good man, a good father, a good public servant. It means that he cannot possibly last long enough in the Senate to amass the security necessary to be a player.

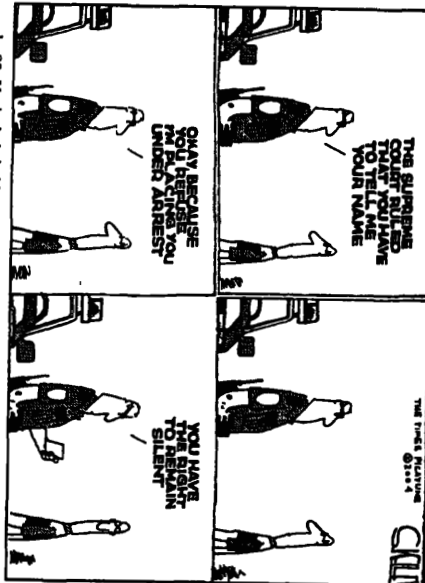
Don't get me wrong. 61 does not look that old nowadays, but it is well beyond the age when one should hope to begin a long, productive Senate career. Knowles will be old enough in a year or two to benefit from some of the changes in Medicare enacted by Lisa Murkowski.

If he lasted three terms — in reality just barely long enough to get a key to the Senate restroom — he would be nearly 70.

He would be nearly 70. He would be nearly 70. He would be nearly 70.

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Which brings us to Knowles. If he were to win, he would be 62 when he assumes the post, 62 at the beginning of a sixth term, 64 at the start of an eighth term. That's 72 in dog years. By the time Knowles could attain the security necessary to be of much use to the state, he'd have to wear little bells on his shoes so his handlers could keep track of him.

Lisa Murkowski offers much of what made Stevens attractive to Alaskans. She is smart. She is tough. She is young — just 47 years old. She already has two years' seniority in the Senate. If elected to a full term, she will be 48 years old when sworn in — and 78 on the first day of her sixth term. That would make her a virtual kid in Senate years, and likely a power to be reckoned with.

This election is critical in many respects. At some point, Stevens no longer will be a senator. When that happens, Alaska will move to the rear of the political bus for a while, awaiting its turn in the circles of power again. It would be all right to elect somebody who simply cannot get us there, and Tony Knowles cannot. He is too old.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

KNOWLES CAMPAIGN OFFICIAL IS A...

Strange choice

IT IS INTERESTING that the Senate campaign of Thory Knowles has enlisted Jim Messina to help run its election effort to unseat Sen. Lisa Murkowski. Messina, a Democratic insider, has taken a leave of absence from his chief of staff post with Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., to serve as campaign director. Dorgan, according to "Roll Call," faces only nominal re-election competition, "so party officials decided Messina's skill could be put to better use in Alaska."

Party officials? Decided? Strange, is it not, how none of that showed up in news stories here?

Messina joined the Knowles camp as it flew into a tizzy over Republican ads suggesting that if Knowles were elected he would be on the same anti-ANWR team as Sens. Bob Kerry and Ted Kennedy. It seems to us patently obvious that he would be, no matter his inclination on the subject. He would be part of the Democrat political machine with the very people he was unable to sway as governor on issues such as opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration.

BEFORE SIGNING UP with Dorgan, Messina was chief of staff for, and ran the 2002 election campaign of, Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont. That effort featured an advertisement that won a spot in the history of negative political attacks: The Baucus TV spot seemed to imply that his GOP rival, in addition to mispending federal education dollars, was a homosexual.

Messina also served as chief of staff for Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, D-N.Y., whose husband was among the 16 people killed on a Long Island Railroad train Dec. 7, 1993, by a crazed gunman. The tragedy inspired McCarthy to run for Congress, where she has won a reputation as perhaps its most anti-gun member.

Neither of the senators Messina worked for, nor Congresswoman McCarthy, has a record of positive votes on issues of the greatest importance to Alaskans. Dorgan and Baucus staunchly have opposed opening the ANWR plan to oil exploration or production — unwavering even though Knowles was in office as governor — and Dorgan's voting record shows he is not much of a supporter of Second Amendment rights.

You have to wonder why Knowles would hire somebody from out of state to direct his campaign, especially when it is someone who has worked for — and advised, presumably — senators who have worked very hard to thwart Alaska's interests. You also have to wonder, if "Roll Call" has it right, whether the decision was his or that of party officials, worried about Sen. Lisa Murkowski's poll numbers continuing to edge upward. Given Messina's prior and current bosses, and their actions, you have to wonder what in the world he will be telling Knowles.

A carwash project ahead of its time

By TOM BRENNAN

My dog Jack has an idea he swears will make us both rich. It's for a 65-mile-an-hour carwash.

He has been watching a lot of special-effects movies and is convinced that a little technological tweak to conventional carwash equipment would make such a thing possible.

All it would take is designating one lane of the Glenn Highway for car washing, installing the equipment and putting up a sign. When a driver sees the carwash coming up, he or she would just pull into the wash lane, hold a credit card against the driver's side window, blast through the cleaning equipment and come out the other side, all bright and shiny.

If he is right about the technology, we could probably do a full wash and wax in passing cars and trucks without slowing them down at all.

"Think of the time it would save," he says.

I've mentioned the idea to several people, most of whom said we could also establish a sideline selling used automobile parts that fly off when a car goes through the wash.

Brennan

Windshield wipers would be a major item, except for vehicles that have them recessed.

Jack is underlined by their cynicism and wants me to move ahead with a plan, he claims that if he had opposable thumbs he would do it himself.

The basic idea is to develop the equipment and then ask the Department of Transportation for permission. The lane wouldn't have to be committed exclusively to carwashes. Only those who flash a credit card in their window would get the wash, everybody else would just fly on past and their vehicles would stay dry.

Credit cards could be scanned on the fly and the cost charged automatically. Collecting signatures might be a problem, but he is thinking about setting up a subscription system with advance authorization.



One friend asked how you could handle detaching the vehicle interiors. I thought that would be an insurmountable difficulty, but my move-watching dog said it could be handled with high-speed insertion of a detangler. Just roll your rear window down, a detangler would come flying in, do a quick wipe-down and parachute out in time for you to roll the window back up before reaching the wash equipment.

The insertions would need to be done a quarter mile or so before the wash operation, the detangler would pop little parachutes out the vehicle window before hitting the wash station. That way they could be retrieved and driven back to their loading station for another run.

Of course the detangler would need to be Army Team Delta members or Navy SEALs. Nobody else could withstand the physical impact of being shot into the back seat of a car and then parachuted back out.

I mentioned to him that highly trained and capable people in those military specialties aren't likely to be interested in washing cars and trucks. He suggested that we use dropouts from their programs. Even the dropouts are pretty damn good. And since this would be a money-making deal, we could pay top wages, help the detangler stay in

shape and keep their skills honed. My dog is very persuasive and thanks he could handle the recruiting.

Another trick would be convincing the Department of Transportation and other state and federal officials to go along with the project.

But Jack has a friend who teaches police dogs to become government bureaucrats (He gives advice along these lines: "In government, one never says 'We messed up.' The appropriate way to cover one's army when things go wrong is to say 'Mistakes were made.' That spreads the blame over the entire bureaucracy and beyond.")

Jack figures his police-dog friend could convince the government people of just about anything. He could be right.

But how in the world I asked him, could we write an environmental impact statement for such a project? Spraying soap, water and wax over fast-moving automobiles would spread that stuff all over the highway and into creeks and road drains. The environmentalists would be all over that project. Like flies on you-know-what.

He is working on that problem too. I think he is not necessarily wrong, maybe just a little ahead of his time.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE...

Hickel Plan

CALL IT THE Hickel Plan. It's been around a long time. But nobody paid much attention to it.

It was a good idea when former Gov. Walter J. Hickel proposed it years ago. It was a good idea when he repeated the idea over and over again. But few listened.

His idea was that some — if not all, as a matter of fact — of the Permanent Fund earnings should be distributed to Alaska's cities, towns, boroughs and villages.

Rather than put all that money in the pockets of individuals to spend on trips to

Hawaii and boomboxes from Costco, he argued, put the golden flow of oil dollars into local areas and let people decide on what to do with the money to meet hometown needs.

Infrastructure is what Hickel urged. Streets. Harbors. School buildings. Power facilities. Sewers. You know what the needs are.

But nobody listened to what Hickel often referred to as "my preaching."

But now some are

THE LEGISLATURE is back in special session at Juneau, and the main item on the table is possible new ways to distribute Permanent Fund earnings.

All of a sudden a lot of mayors like Hickel's idea.

Oh, of course, nobody endorses taking away the game dollars that go to all of us in the form of annual dividend payments. We all know those are our God-given rights as Alaskans. Game, game, game more.

But, on the other hand, maybe it's not too far fetched now to give consideration to the Hickel Plan.

Mayors and city councils and local assemblymen want part of the money, too.

They've seen the light as legislative appropriations have been scaled back.

Maybe — they harbor the thought in their hearts — it wouldn't be all bad if some of the Permanent Fund dollars came to their local governments in unrestricted form, dollars they could do with as they will, to meet the needs spelled out by their local constituents.

Well, Hickel was right back then — back when nobody listened.

He's right now — and it's good some others finally are hearing what he has long been saying.

Save your sanity: Boycott commercials

By ELSIE PATKOTAK

Am I the only one getting more and more annoyed at the fact that I pay to go see a movie and then have to watch commercials?

It's bad enough I have to sit through trailers of movies I'd never go to see with the sound track jacked up to ear-deafening level. But then they have the nerve to actually show commercials. The same commercials I see on TV, only with large screens and big screens they seem twice as obnoxious.

Not only can't I get up for a bathroom break or to let the dog out or to get a snack while they're on, but I have now paid good money for the privilege of contemplating the joys of running shoes, cars and sugar-filled soft drinks. And I resent that I resent the hell out of that.

Aren't theater owners and movie studios making enough money on their overpriced tickets to say nothing of the \$3 they charge for a bag of popcorn I can get for free if I stop by Animal Pet Warehouse? If I want to watch commercials, I'll just wait for the movie to make it to the networks during their summer doldrums.

Maybe I'm over-reacting to all this

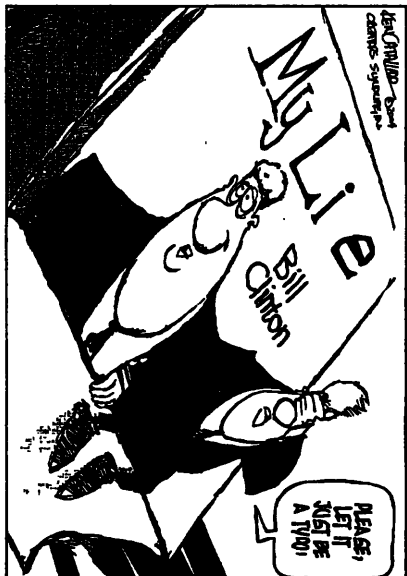
Patkotak

But when I pay \$20 to see a movie, get a soda and a snack, and don't have enough left over to buy two hours on a parking meter downtown, I figure I shouldn't have to be bothered with commercials.

I am also probably reacting so strongly because of a new commercial I saw on TV recently that caused me to pull the plug and run out into the Anchorage summer screaming in horror.

It's a commercial for a laptop computer. The people in the commercial are in a coliseum surrounded by the remnants of the glory that was the Roman Empire. The setting is gorgeous. The day is beautiful.

And what are the people doing? They are swinging around with their laptops.



held out from their bodies with a picture of the coliseum they are standing in, showing on their screen. I couldn't tell if the commercial was for some kind of camera that lets you take a picture of where you are and send it instantly to all your stay-at-home colleagues and family or whether it was some comparison of the reality with the picture to show how clear the screen was.

To be honest, I didn't care. I didn't leave it on long enough to find out. I got no further than those pathetic people swirled around the coliseum with their laptops as their dance partner when I pulled the plug.

Is this what we have really evolved to? Have we become so attached to things that we can no longer look at reality unless it is sifted through the prism of the computer screen? That reality, in fact, suffers in comparison with the picture we can pull up on our computer? That he is just one big commercial for something, anything?

In movie theaters, have we become so injured to the sales pitch that we no longer even notice it's there? When I complain about the commercials to friends, they look at me puzzled. I am complaining about the inevitable and that is, apparently, a waste of time and

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LEGISLATURE REASSEMBLES FOR ...

Another try

THE LEGISLATURE is gathered in Juneau to make another try at coming up with a long-term fix to the state's fiscal problems.

The special session was called by Gov. Frank Murkowski and many legislators are grumbling about returning so soon after they said no to proposals similar to those before them now.

Their complaining is understandable, but Gov. Murkowski is rightly maintaining that the problem has not gone away and that filling the fiscal gap is critical to the state's financial well-being. At the top of the session's agenda is a measure to allow use of at least a portion of Permanent Fund earnings for state expenses.

Individual dividends would still be paid from the fund's earnings. And though some critics claim any use of earnings would be a raid on the Permanent Fund, such a fix could actually assure that dividend checks would continue for years to come.

Using a portion of Permanent Fund earnings for state expenses may not be the ultimate solution to the fiscal problem, but it's a good place to start.

MURKOWSKI would like to put such a measure before the voters in the November election. Without a legislative decision now, voter ratification of a fiscal fix would otherwise be forced to wait until at least the next statewide election in 2006. Such ratification may or may not be essential depending on which fix the Legislature chooses, but the governor wants the option of putting it on the ballot.

Among those watching the outcome of the special session are prospective investors in Alaska's oil industry. They are looking for any signs that the state is inclined to send them the bill for Alaska's fiscal fix — in the form of higher oil taxes. Some frustrated Democrats seem inclined to do just that, though hopefully cooler heads will prevail. Investments like those at risk are essential in order to grow the state's economy.

The state's fiscal gap — the difference between what it spends and what its present revenue streams bring in — is a threat to its credit rating.

Using a portion of Permanent Fund earnings for state expenses may not be the ultimate solution to the fiscal problem, but it's a good place to start. That is the purpose for which the fund was established and the time has come when that purpose should be honored.

The special session may be a good reason for legislators to grumble, but it will enable focused discussion on a vital issue with the public looking over their shoulder.

Whether the session succeeds or not remains to be seen, but — as we have said before — it's worth trying.

Israel won its war with Palestinians

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

While no one was looking, something historic happened in the Middle East. The Palestinian intifada is over, and the Palestinians have lost.

For Israel, the victory is bitter. The past four years of terrorism have killed almost 1,000 Israelis and maimed thousands of others. But Israel has won strategically. The intent of the intifada was to demoralize Israel, destroy its economy, bring it to its knees, and thus force it to withdraw and surrender to Palestinian demands, just as Israel withdrew in defeat from southern Lebanon in May 2000.

That did not happen. Israel's economy was certainly wounded, but it is growing again. Tourism had dwindled to almost nothing at the height of the intifada, but tourists are returning. And the Israelis were never demoralized. They kept living their lives, the young people in particular returning to cities and discos and buses just hours after a horrific bombing. Israelis turned out to be a lot tougher and braver than the Palestinians had imagined.

The end of the intifada does not mean the end of terrorism. There was terrorism before the intifada and there will be terrorism to come. What has happened, however, is an end to systematic, regular, debilitating, unstopable terror — terror as a reliable weapon. At the height of the intifada, there were nine suicide attacks in Israel killing 85 Israelis in just one month (March 2002). In the past three months there have been none.

The overall level of violence has been reduced by more than 70 percent. How did Israel do it? By ignoring its critics and launching a two-pronged campaign of self-defense.

First, Israel targeted terrorist leaders — attacks so hypocritically denounced by Westerners who, at the same time, cheer the hunt for and demand the head of Osama bin Laden. The top echelon of Hamas and other terrorist groups has been either arrested, killed or driven underground. The others are now so afraid of Israeli precision and intelligence — the last Hamas operative to be killed by missile was riding a motorcycle — that they are forced to devote



much of their time and energy to self-protection and concealment.

Second, the fence. Only about a quarter of the separation fence has been built, but its effect is unmistakable. The northern part is already complete, and attacks in northern Israel have dwindled to almost nothing.

This success does not just save innocent lives, it changes the strategic equation of the whole conflict.

Yasser Arafat started the intifada in September 2000, just weeks after he had rejected, at Camp David, Israel's offer of withdrawal, settlement evacuation, sharing of Jerusalem and establishment of a Palestinian state. Arafat wanted all that, of course, but without having to make peace and recognize a Jewish state. Hence the terror campaign — to force Israel to give it all up unilaterally.

Arafat failed, spectacularly. The violence did not bring Israel to its knees. Instead, it created chaos, lawlessness and economic disaster in the Palestinian areas. The Palestinians know the ruin that Arafat has brought, and they are beginning to protest. It. He promised them blood and victory, he delivered on the blood.

Even more important, they have lost their place at the table. Israel is now defining a new equilibrium, and they are being left out of it — the separation fence is unilaterally drawing the line

that separates Israelis and Palestinians. The Palestinians were offered the chance to negotiate that frontier at Camp David and chose war instead. Now they are paying the price.

It stands to reason. It is the height of absurdity to launch a terrorist war against Israel, then demand the right to determine the nature and route of the barrier built to prevent that very terrorism.

These new strategic realities are not just creating a new equilibrium, they are creating the first hope for peace since Arafat officially tore up the Oslo accords four years ago. Once Israel has withdrawn from Gaza and has completed the fence, terrorism as a strategic option will be effectively dead. The only way for the Palestinians to achieve statehood and dignity, and to determine the contours of their own state, will be to negotiate a final peace based on genuine coexistence with a Jewish state.

It could be a year, five years or a generation until the Palestinians come to that realization. The pity is that so many Arab and Israeli will have had to die before then.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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ELMENDORF MISSES THE CUT AS NEW...

Raptor base

AIR FORCE MAGAZINE, which obviously closely follows military matters, reports in its June issue that Elmendorf Air Force Base was an also-ran in the processes of selecting the installation to serve as operational headquarters for the first F/A-22 Raptor squadron.

The nation's newest high-tech fighter unit, when it comes on line late this year, will be based at Langley Air Force Base, Va. And of special interest here was this:

"The Air Force will await the results of the 2005 base realignment and closure round before selecting which base will follow Langley AFB, Va., as home for operational F/A-22s. Service officials do not want to prejudice the BRAC process."

Does that mean that some back in Pentagon country think Elmendorf could be a target? Maybe so. Hereford, only Fort Richardson had seemed a possibility — if even a remote one — in the closure and realignment process.

In any event, the magazine said that Elmendorf was in the running for the F/A-22 assignment, along with the 8th and 11th Air Force bases in Florida, and Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho.

"Those other bases," the magazine said, "will be likely contenders in future deliberations, but there could be new ones on the list that meet the basing requirements for the new fighter. The (realignment and closure) commission is scheduled to make its recommendations for which bases to close in September 2005."

MEANWHILE, Air Force Magazine said Langley is in the last stages of preparations to receive the first of the new Raptor advanced tactical fighters before the end of this year. The F/A-22s are scheduled to replace the F-15 Eagles, and the first of the Raptors are scheduled to reach operational capability at Langley in December 2005.

Ten of the new aircraft were delivered to the Air Force in November 2002. Fourteen more are on order from the builder, Lockheed Martin. The plan is for production of 90 F/A-22s a year beginning in 2006, with the Air Force seeking a full assignment of 224 aircraft.

Funding for that schedule, however, still awaits congressional approval, and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has suggested further appropriations for more of the new fighters may have to take a back seat to other military needs.

Even so, the new fighter has produced impressive results so far. Lt. Gen. Ronald E. Keys, deputy chief of staff for air and space operations, said in a recent test four Raptors engaged eight F-15 Eagles in simulated combat and "cleared the sky of F-15s before many of the Eagles could even get off a shot."

We'll see them at Elmendorf sometime in the years ahead, no doubt — assuming, of course, that no closure and realignment commission edict comes our way.

Tyrants are attacking your liberties

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Suppose you saw a fat, old, ugly, cigarette-smoking man married to a beautiful young lady, what prediction would you make about the man's income? If you're like most, you'd predict that this guy has a lot of money.

In effect, that fat, old, ugly, cigarette-smoking man is telling the woman, "I can't compete for your hand on the basis of a guy like Williams, so I'm going to offset my handicaps by offering you a higher price." In the name of fairness, should that kind of discrimination be banned — namely beautiful women treating ugly old men differently from handsome young men?

Airlines typically charge half fare for children, and surely, they can't justify that practice by saying that it costs twice as much to fly an adult from New York to Los Angeles. Airlines also charge business travelers higher prices than those charged tourists. Again, they can't justify the price difference by saying it costs more to fly businessmen than it costs to fly tourists.

What should be done about this kind of discrimination?

Antitank charges lower fares to senior citizens than it charges younger people, and it's not because it costs less to haul older people than younger people. Antitank is not alone with this kind of age discrimination; it's rare.

Williams



That's not to say, of course, that some supermarkets do it, and some taxicab companies do it. There are numerous instances where people are charged different prices based upon some physical or behavioral characteristic.

Should price discrimination be outlawed? Yes, according to the reasoning of Professor John F. Banzhaf. He's the lawyer who led the attack on tobacco companies and fast-food chains, saying they were responsible respectively for tobacco-related diseases and obesity.

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A recent addition to Banzhaf's agenda is to outlaw "ladies' night," saying, "Different prices for men and women constitute illegal gender-based discrimination, and perpetrators can be sued not only for monetary damages but in many cases also for attorney fees and punitive damages."

He boasts that ladies' nights have been ruled illegal in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Pennsylvania and recently New Jersey.

It's fruitless to attempt to convince Banzhaf that price discrimination is a benign, standard and routine pricing technique. It's even practiced by his legal profession. Professor Banzhaf's true agenda is tyrannical control of our lives.

Here's my question to you: Once Banzhaf ends up getting ladies' night outlawed in the other 40 states, do you think he'll be finished? I wouldn't bet the rent money on it.

The reasoning Banzhaf uses in attacking nightclub practice of charging ladies cheaper prices is also applicable to airlines charging children and tourists cheaper prices than adults and businessmen, businesses and other entities charging seniors cheaper prices than younger people, and theaters charging cheaper matinee prices than evening prices.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

BEGICH MAKES GOOD MOVE ON ...

Rural affairs

MAYOR MARK BEGICH has hired a rural affairs coordinator, a strategic measure that recognizes the importance of good relations between Anchorage and rural Alaska.

Appointed to fill the position is Jessica Black, a Greek in Alutashan from the villages of Fort Yukon and Nenana. The job is apparently a temporary one and calls for Black to report in August on the program's success.

The position was created by the Begich administration in partnership with the Denali Commission, a federal agency funded by Congress to improve life in rural Alaska.

Black's duties will include handling correspondence and constituent contacts on rural and Native issues and working with city departments to suggest ways to improve services affecting rural and Native Alaskans, including public health and safety, economic development and diversity.

Anchorage's economy is directly tied to that of the Bush and the health of each is important to both. The city's private sector and government and social service agencies provide goods and services of all kinds to rural Alaskans.

THE NEED for renewing and improving Anchorage's relationship with Bush communities was illustrated in March when the Alaska Federation of Natives voted to move its 2005 convention from Anchorage to Fairbanks.

The annual gathering is held in the fall and draws about 4,000 delegates, with an economic impact estimated at \$4 million. Delegates, their friends and families attend from all over Alaska.

AFN President Julie Kika said the move to Fairbanks was not intended to punish Anchorage for any slights. Instead it was seen as a way to make the convention "more accessible to more people."

But the vote to move came after an AFN board meeting at which some members said they have been feeling that Anchorage didn't appreciate the opportunity to host the conference and that the city was primarily interested in the delegates' money.

Whatever the basis for the decision, it should be taken as a wake-up call for Anchorage. If AFN decides to hold its big convocation elsewhere, let's make sure the reason isn't dissatisfaction with our city or the welcome given its delegates.

It is equally important that the people of rural Alaska feel welcome here throughout the year, both individually and in groups of all sizes.

Putting a rural affairs coordinator at City Hall looks like a step in the right direction.

Anchorage's economy is directly tied to that of the Bush and the health of each is important to both.

Summer chores: Catch a fish and grill it

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

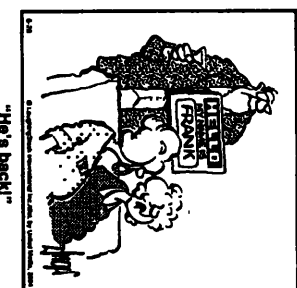
HAPPY FIRST DAY of summer. The new season, as has been noted before, begins this afternoon at 4:47 p.m. — which means it's time to put a line in the water, catch a fish, fire up the grill, and pull a cool one from the fridge. 'Tis the season of happy days.

SUMMER MUSINGS: Always had the idea that Last Chance Gulch in downtown Helena, Mont., took the cake among great street names of the Wild, Wild West. Now along comes a challenger: Nameless Cave Road in Rapid City, S.D. Anybody out there have one that's better? Any from Alaska's starred peak or glorious present?

A WEEK FROM today, Congressman Don Young will be seated — and no doubt gently roasted — as Commonwealth North presents him with its Walter J. Hickel Award for Distinguished Public Policy. Young will be front and center at a banquet in the expansive lobby of the new \$1.1-billion-dollar Concourse C at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, three days before its official opening. The award by the 25-year-old public policy study group is named in honor of Alaska's former governor and former Interior secretary, who co-founded Commonwealth North with the late Gov. Bill Began in 1979. The festivities at the \$100-a-plate affair will begin with a triple or two at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30. Joe Griffith and left



Tobin



"He's back!"

at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Those scientific types also say the largest mountains in Tibet and Nepal are rising only 5 millimeters a year.

A University of Utah report, published in the June issue of the scientific journal *Geography*, says the magnitude 7.9 November 2002 Denali fault earthquake in Alaska touched off more than 1,000 smaller earthquakes in Yellowstone National Park. The "intense swarm" of local quakes temporarily altered the eruption patterns of at least 22 geysers during the winter of 2002-03.

THE BETTING GAME: You might win a free brew at your favorite pub by betting your buddy that he can't tell you when *Blindside* Air Force Base was activated. You win if he says anything but July 1940. Makes it two full ones by betting he can't tell you when Belknap AFB at Fairbanks was activated. You lose, however, if he says October 1944.

SPEAKING OF military matters, a few sturdy veterans from the hands of the Aleutians in World War II are scheduled to make a return visit to Adak on Sept. 22, or thereabouts. As is the custom, these William Warrors, as they call themselves, will be led by Al King of Sunrise, Fla. — an amazingly dedicated volunteer who keeps the aging ex-servicemen of the forgotten war in touch with one another through newsletters, e-mails, and local one- and two-day get-togethers around the country every month or so throughout the year. So says the Okeanos Institute.

Plans call for members of this year's Aleutian-bound group to arrive here at various times on Sept. 15, rally the next morning for what has become a traditional rite — a breakfast buffet at Greenview restaurant — and then head out for a stopover in Kodiak later that day. As things shape up at the moment, all of those coming here this year look part in the landing at Adak on May 11, 1943 — with the exception of King, who arrived on the scene later.

NAMES, NAMES, NAMES: James Webb is the new executive chef at the Petaluma Inn of Anchorage. He moved to the Pet Club kitchen from Salmon and Seward's Saloon and Grill.

Landi McLaughlin, who headed Delta Air Lines' sales and marketing operations here for a decade or so before her retirement a couple of years ago, is back home in Anchorage after a long motor excursion to Florida, Houston, New Orleans, Salt Lake City and national parties and there along the way. Claudia Sayles, a major player in Alaska, tourism circles here not too many years ago, has joined Holland America Lines in Southern California, handling sales and promotion duties in such spots as Marina Del Rey, Venice, Bakersfield, San Jose, and Brentwood.

HOOPSTERS UNITED: The field for the Top of the World Basketball Classic at the University of Alaska is all set. The Nov. 18-21 tourney at the Carlson Center in Fairbanks, with UAF as host, includes Central Florida, Western Michigan, Winthrop, Utah State, Portland, Georgia Southern and New Mexico State. The lineup for this fall's Great Alaska Shootout, as everybody probably already knows, includes Alabama, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Utah, Wake Forest, Washington and, naturally, UAA. The tournament will be played at the Sullivan Arena Nov. 24-27.

SUNDAY PUNDAY: A fellow sailing at a Fifth Avenue seafood bar noticed the chef was working with one arm in a sling. He asked, "What happened?" "No big deal," the cook said. "I just pulled a muscle."

William J. Tobin is an editor of *The Anchorage Times*.

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STATE SHOULD BUY A...

Jet plane

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Safety made headlines when it proposed to spend \$2 million in federal homeland security funds to buy a small, used jet aircraft. Despite the furor, the acquisition sounds like a sensible use of money to us, even in relatively lean times like the present. The jet would become part of the department's aviation fleet, which now consists of 41 aircraft, a mix of fixed-wing planes and helicopters. The largest and fastest of the fixed wings are King Airs, twin-engine turboprops. Total cost of the jet would be \$2 million plus trade-in of a used King Air. The jet would provide the department with a high-speed aircraft that could be used for search and rescue, emergency response, law enforcement missions, wildlife and fisheries enforcement, support to other agencies, prisoner transport and transportation for the governor. That last use — transportation for the governor — is of course what caught the eye of the news media and got all the attention. The jet was widely portrayed as a proposed perk for the governor. But while we think it can be cost-effective to get the governor where he is going in a hurry, especially in an emergency situation, the justification for the jet's acquisition will almost certainly be all of the uses put together. A huge state like Alaska needs at least one aircraft that can go places in a hurry when needed.

Paint ballers

WE CAN THINK of a few activities that should be banned in Anchorage parks before paint ball battles, but it's a relatively short list. Live hand grenade practice, per-haps, or bullfighting. And then there would be recreational use of earth-moving equipment, strip mining and, of course, celebratory building implosions. Paint-ball battles can be a positive and enjoyable activity, especially when they enable adult parents to play with their teen-age children in a way both can enjoy. But such activities should take place in appropriate venues — and public parks are definitely not the best ones. Games that leave paint stains on trees and unexploded paint balls on the ground should not only be banned in the parks, the bans should be backed up with hefty fines. There should be places for paint ballers to engage in their favorite activities, but private recreation parks would be the most appropriate venues. The need may, in fact, be an opportunity for entrepreneurs looking for money-making ventures. There may also be some public lands on which such activities are allowable, perhaps undeveloped areas with minimal greenery. But anything with a real park-like setting should be off limits. City parks do meet many needs, but trying to accommodate paint ballers in most parks would be a stretch.

Laughed 'til it hurt

I laughed till my ribs hurt while reading Bill Tobin's June 8 column on the media coverage of the D-Day landing. Oh how true it is that the profession of journalism has sunk to new lows at the hands of the liberals and apolo-

The slant on the news illustrated by your piece, combined with the facts as history reveals them, illustrates clearly just how poor a job schools are doing today. Couple that with human nature and our tendency to look for the worst in everything, and you have today's reporting on the news. I watch with utter amazement from afar what is happening on the political scene in Alaska today. It is scary. Oh God, please bring us another Bill Egan, and soon.

Vern Weigman
West Palm Beach, Fla.

Much news not credible

Great column on how D-Day might have been covered. It often seems that the immediate reporting media have lost all sense of proportion or judgment. The New York Times, Washington Post and Los Angeles Times seem to assign credibility to everyone except non-left Americans.

Donald N. Anderson, Ph.D.
Anchorage

A teeny little point

"D-Day as covered by today's media" on June 8 was very good. It was funny in the right places, and you obviously know the weak spots and strong points of the news media. Throughout the column, I couldn't help but think of many headlines I've seen since we invaded Iraq. All in all, a well-done column.

You only missed one tiny, teeny point. In a humble attempt to follow your pattern of pointing out wrong decisions and silly logic, let me plagiarize your excellent writing.

The Japanese Air Force conducted a successful sneak attack on the U.S. Navy base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. As

Letters to The Times



A response, President Roosevelt and Congress declared war on Brazil.

Lew Pumpfunny
Eagle River

A teeny little correction

I just returned from a week of visiting family in Eagle River. While there, I read your editorial, D-Day as covered by today's media. In it, you covered my thoughts exactly with respect to the reporting of the past year about the war in Iraq.

La Cal James II Dayley (Ret.)
St. Louis, Mo.

Greetings from Fort Collins

Thoroughly enjoyed your satirical D-Day piece. I've e-mailed it everywhere I still look at The Voice of the Times every day from here in Fort Collins, Colorado while missing Alaska.

Doug Van Beeth
Photographer alumnus

Liberal media bashes military

At least 90 percent of today's media is liberal, totally committed to bashing our military and efforts to defend ourselves. It is also committed to trashing traditional values, taking God out of everything and praising the "intellectual" class.

Our universities, similar to the Islamic clerics continue to teach our young people to follow this line of thinking. May God help us.

Lynn Bernheim
Rogue River, Ore.

Another new member

What a great idea and a wonderful June 6 column by Bill Tobin. An invitation to join a bold new society. It's one of the very best I've ever read in an Alaska paper. You really hit the nail on the head. Consider me a full-fledged member of LCI (Loser Government Inc.).

Bob Hickey
Anchorage

How does anything get done?

Bravo, Bill Tobin! An insight into today's non-accomplish of reality. You hit the proverbial nail on the head with this one.

"We've come a long way baby" — in a modern, Never-Never Land — a Fidler Flan world, where we don't have to grow up, insulated, via 24-hour TV in our living rooms from the uncertainties and uncertainties of real life.

The overpowering glut of conducting news and information in our lives has created a system overload condition making it almost impossible to function constructively.

Every decision is bandied about, beaten up and reversed so often that it's a wonder anything constructive gets done — permanently.

Eleanor Murphy
Homer

Respecting our troops

Congratulations on your editorial about the World War II memorial.

"A Tribute To A Nation Of Heroes" is a wonderful article showing respect for those 400,000 troops paying the ultimate sacrifice as well as the 16 million or so who served during that conflict.

Our father was a Marine sergeant in World War I and a Navy gunner's mate in World War II. We lost him in 1943. As the Navy saying goes, "Well done."

Vote of the Times. Thank you for remembering our troops, dead and alive. Keep up the good work.

Robert O. Baker, Ph.D.
Cmdr USN (ret.)
Anchorage

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

CHANGING TAX RULES IS A...

Risky business

A FEW DEMOCRATIC legislators are fond of pointing out that some North Slope oil fields pay zero production taxes.

Sounds scandalous, doesn't it? So why does the state allow such a free ride for oil companies?

The answer is simple. The rule is anything but free and the state has a real financial interest in keeping the fields flowing. The state makes big bucks from those fields despite the lack of production taxes.

Let's start with royalties. The state has an average royalty interest of 12.5 percent in North Slope fields, including the marginal fields that the economic limit factor encourages to keep flowing.

The state also imposes corporate income taxes on the producers and receives a share of property taxes from the fields and their associated facilities.

The economic limit factor — known as ELIF — is a formula to maintain production on marginal fields by reducing taxes to help offset declining volumes and rising costs. The tax break improves profitability on the fields and provides incentive for the producers to invest in keeping them flowing.

SINCE CRUDE OIL prices have increased lately, bringing hundreds of millions of dollars into the state treasury, some Democrats in the Legislature want to take an even larger share of the revenue realized by the producing companies. They are, as the old-time gold miners might put it, eyeing the size of their partner's poke and wanting more.

The Democrats are not the only ones looking at changing the state's oil tax regime. The Alaska Department of Revenue is looking at tweaking the system to encourage more oil company investment in the state.

A department official said the agency is concerned that private-sector spending on exploration and development is not sufficient to keep oil flowing at current levels. He said Revenue is looking at remedies that would encourage companies to reinvest money earned in Alaska rather than spend it elsewhere.

And the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee is investigating in a study on the cost of doing business for oil companies in various parts of the world, including Alaska.

But all concerned might want to heed the words of Kevin Meyers, president of ConocoPhillips Alaska. Meyers cautions that changing the tax rules could frighten away prospective investors and jeopardize the gas pipeline. Change can be beneficial, but in the investment game, stability and predictability are vital.

PAC contributors are the difference

By PAUL JENKINS

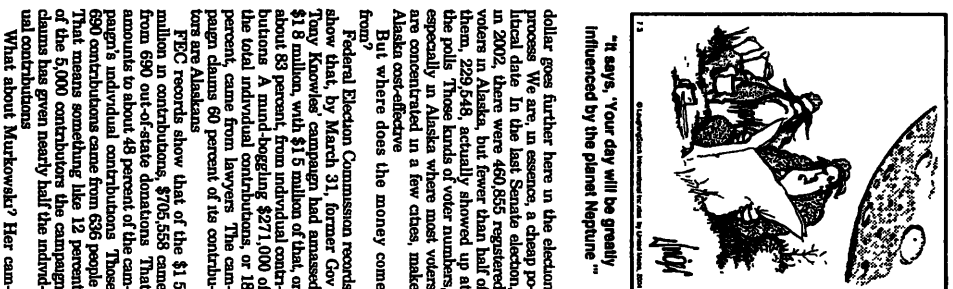
It would seem that campaigns for U.S. Senate, in Alaska and everywhere else nowadays, long ago stopped being mostly local affairs. With the growth of the federal government and burgeoning power centralized in Washington, D.C., individual senators have vast power over the lives of Americans from coast to coast, not just those who voted for them.

Because of that, Senate elections have become, more or less, national contests. No longer do the corner drugstore, or the mason, or the school teacher completely fuel the campaigns' political fires with their contributions — if they ever did. In Alaska, as with virtually every other state in the union, much of the money needed to run the increasingly expensive election efforts comes from Outside, and campaigning has become a growth industry.

Whether that is good or bad can be debated at some length. Should residents of states be the only ones funding Senate campaigns? What about free speech rights? Can you cut them off at the state line? Green Party candidate Jim Sykes has sued the Federal Election Commission to halt Outside political contributions. The case is pending.

This much is clear: campaigns have become big business. Republicans and Democrats across the nation running for Senate this year have amassed a stunning \$260 million, with New York Democrat Charles Schumer leading the pack, raising in more than \$25 million.

So far in Alaska, the two leading Senate candidates have socked away slightly more than \$4 million, small potatoes on the national stage. But that could change as quickly as oil prices. You can bet that more money, bundles of it, is headed this way. Alaska's seat could be pivotal in the power politics of the Senate.



Alaska has raised \$2.4 million, with \$1.4 million coming from individuals. Seven hundred thirty-seven contributions from Outside gave 842 contributions totaling \$705,749, or about 50 percent of the individual contribution total. The campaign says it has 3,557 individual donors, with 2,599 of them — or 73 percent — in Alaska. That means some 20 percent of her individual donors gave about 50 percent of the campaign contributions.

Where did the rest come from? It came from Political Action Committees, mostly from outside the state. Those contributions offer the sharpest contrast between the campaigns, with Knowles garnering \$257,123 to Murkowski's \$810,191.

Interestingly, Murkowski's PAC donations read like a "Who's Who" of American business and they account for 67 percent of her PAC donations. Labor PACs have kicked in slightly less than 6 percent. Her PAC contributors represent doctors, nurses, oil and gas interests, engineers, accountants and even the American Sugar Cane League.

Knowles' PAC total includes only 9 percent from business interests, and 32 percent from labor. Her PACs represent a host of social organizations, trial lawyers, abortion rights groups, and community action organizations. He did get a contribution from the Sugar Beet Growers Assn.

A very clear ideological divide can be seen in the PAC contributions in general. It would be safe to say that Murkowski's PAC money mostly comes from that segment of society that provides jobs and growth here and across the country. Knowles' PACs come from a segment that generally does not, but depends on government for its own political ends.

There are those who say there is not much difference between the two candidates, but nothing could be further from the truth. They are as different as night and day.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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THE 9TH CIRCUIT COURT ...

Bombs again

A S USUAL, THE 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has been struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court. Hum. What else is new?

This time it came in the case in which the San Francisco-based circuit court ruled that it was unconstitutional for the Pledge of Allegiance to say that ours is one nation "under God."

That, said the often overruled judges of the 9th Circuit, violates the First Amendment guarantee that government will not "establish religion."

Good grief. Justice William Rehnquist likened the phrase in the pledge to the motto "In God We Trust" on U.S. currency and to the phrase which opens each session of the Supreme Court, "God save this honorable court."

The high court's 9-0 ruling reversing the 9th Circuit came on procedural grounds, which held that the man who brought suit against the phrase on behalf of his 10-year-old daughter was not the full-time legal custodian of the girl.

The youngster and her mother, by the way, said in the original suit that they had no objection to the phrase being in the pledge.

More will be heard on this, of course. The anti-God forces can be counted on to be back again with a new argument that may well find its way to the Supreme Court—especially if it goes through the 9th Circuit.

It's the usual thing

THE REVERSAL of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in the case involving the Pledge of Allegiance, as discussed above, came just a few days after the high court had delivered another kick in the pants to the San Francisco-based tower of judicial wisdom.

In that earlier case, the high court overruled a 9th Circuit decision that President George W. Bush needed to come up with a full environmental impact statement before opening up American highways to Mexican trucks.

Under the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement, better known as NAFTA, Mexican trucks were to have been allowed into border states by 1995 and into the rest of the country by 2000. Labor unions and environmental lobbies have been blocking implementation of that agreement.

The 9th Circuit went along with their protectionist arguments. The Supreme Court tossed them out. Again, by a 9-0 slam at the 9th Circuit.

Who can you believe these days?

By TOM BRENNAN

So who can you trust to tell the truth about global warming?

Politicians? Yeah, right. Academics or environmentalists? If you think so, it's time to cut back on the recreational pharmaceuticals.

Scientists? There are some trustworthy scientists, certainly. But far too many have become passionate activists beating the drum for their particular specialty and point of view.

That is certainly their right, but in doing so they undermine the perception of objectivity and credibility of their fellows. Sorting out the fact and deciding who to trust would be anything but easy. And who would believe even the good ones?

So that leaves us with the traditional source of truth and wisdom on all things in the fields of politics, science and sports: our favorite bartenders. (There was a time when I would have referred to them as our neighborhood bar-

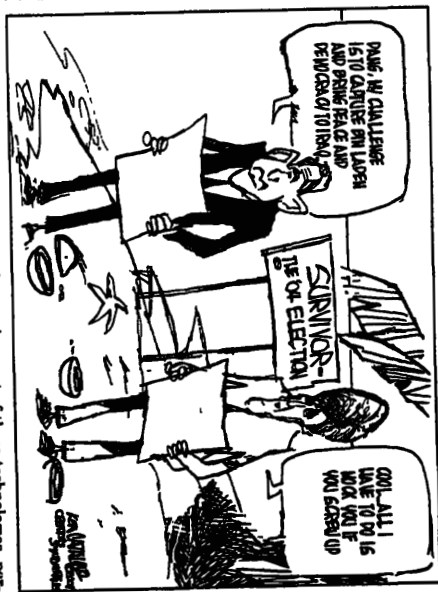
tenders, but I don't think there is such a thing anymore, at least in this country.)

Then why, you ask, don't we solve the world's problems by convening a grand convention of bartenders? Sorry, such a gathering would be just as goofy as any congress of politicians, professors, green extremists or scientists.

Individually, bartenders can be a font of wisdom on many matters. Collectively their thoughts would carry the same weight as a convective of half-drunk poker players late in the evening. They would have opinions aplenty, but to gather their voices would contain sound and fury signifying only that it's hearing closing time.

This situation is a dilemma and a shame. Certainly the earth is going through a warming trend, you can see that everywhere you turn — and on every channel, for that matter. Not to mention the movie theaters.

The real question is how much a sign. So who can you trust to tell the truth about global warming?



significant but natural warming trend has been exacerbated by human activities. If the answer is anything significant, that would be real cause for alarm.

It could well signify that humans are over-grazing their planetary range and that the earth's ability to shake off the impact of people's driving and sneezing and belching is getting dangerously close to its limit, perhaps too close for a fix.

There are certainly many who claim that the whole thing is being caused by human activities. That seems unlikely, but if that is the case, we need to know it. If the end really is near, we would know whether to make long-term investments and buy multi-year magazine subscriptions.

If in fact fossil fuels and cow flatulence are impacting the world's environment in a significant way, we need to consider what, if anything, should be done about them. For instance, will new or developing technologies make the problem go away in the normal course of events, say by eliminating harmful exhaust and improving hard technology?

If not, would it help to accelerate development of those technologies, perhaps with a research and development program like the Apollo project that landed men on the moon?

The world may also want to consider whether it should try colonizing other planets to keep the human species going when earth becomes a cinder. Such an idea could also carry other useful species like dogs, cats, moose, salmon and bartenders.

Of course the world should also consider whether keeping the human species going would be the best thing for the universe. The answer to that may not be as obvious as you think. It might be better for the cosmos if we just sent apes, let the evolution process start anew and hope for better results next time.

I don't have any answers. I'm just raising the issues and wondering how we can deal with them when the best traditional sources of wisdom have squandered their credibility.

If you really want answers, ask a bartender.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

IGNORING REALITY TO DIMINISH THE...

Reagan legacy

THE LIBERAL SPIN artists, astonished by the outpouring of public affection for Ronald Reagan, are in a great whirl to try to discredit the former president and convince Americans that he really didn't accomplish much in the White House.

Even his powerful actions that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union are being brushed aside in this rush to revise history.

Take, for example, the article published in last Sunday's Anchorage Daily News by James Rosen of McClatchy Newspapers.

"Already, early soundings indicate that the final verdict won't be as unanimous as it now seems. Already, there is disagreement among historians and Russian experts over whether Reagan played a heroic role in ending the Cold War, or merely a helpful one."

"SOME NAVSAVERS" — listening to what Stanford University historian Barton Bernstein called "the nostalgic euphoria" of the last week — say other factors were more important.

"They cite the rise of Gorbachev and his perestroika reforms, deep-rooted economic stagnation in the Soviet system, much of it poorly understood in the West, and the courage of Soviet and East European anti-communist dissidents, from Russian Andrei Sakharov to Poland's Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel in what was then Czechoslovakia."

Do tell. Too bad that Stanford historian Bernstein and McClatchy News Service writer Rosen didn't consult with Mr. Walesa himself.

In a tribute to Reagan that he wrote for the Wall Street Journal on June 11, Walesa made the real situation very clear. Send the Polish hero, writing from Gdansk.

"When talking about Ronald Reagan, I have to be personal. Why? Because we owe him our liberty. This can't be said often enough by people who lived under oppression for half a century, until communism fell in 1989."

Powerful "We owe him our liberty." It will take more than a pack of college professors, journalists, and revisionist historians to brush that from the Reagan legacy.

Impulse buying used to mean layaway

By ELISE PATKOTIAK

I was raised by parents who had been raised in the Great Depression. My mother's family was lucky. Her dad owned a grocery store and even in the Great Depression people had to eat. But through her whole life my mother carried the memory of neighbors coming in to the store with government coupons for food and the look of humiliation on their faces as they quietly slipped the papers to her dad.

My dad's mom responded to the Great Depression by pulling him out of school and putting him to work. The excuse also used then, and the excuse still repeated as gospel by the family, is that the doctors told her he would go blind if he stayed in school any longer because his eyes were so weak. So she had him quit school and get him a job as a butcher. Just the thing for a kid going blind — hand him sharp knives.

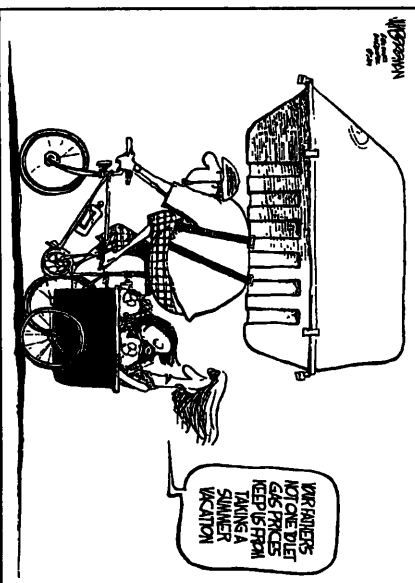
Such was the fear and respect my grandmother engendered in her progeny that to this day they swear by that story even though my father died well into his seventies with his eyesight intact. The reality is that this move kept the family out of debt.



Because of this background, my post-Patkotia era had a horror of debt. If we needed something — whether it was Christmas presents or new winter coats — we either had the money for them or we didn't. There was no in-between. My brother and I grew up understanding that the words, "We can't afford it," literally meant we didn't have the money for it.

I recently went to the bank for a small loan. As I reviewed my financials with the banker, he was impressed with the fact that I had so little debt — a mortgage and one credit card — a paid off monthly CD habits the hard.

Even as I filled out the paper work for the loan, I felt the presence of my parents on my shoulders, shaking their heads at my shopping.



heads and reminding me that if I couldn't pay for it, then I couldn't afford it. I went ahead with the loan but have felt guilty about it ever since.

America is a nation in debt — from the federal government's hemorrhaging red ink budget to families living off their credit cards. If we want something, we assume we have some God-given right to obtain it. We have second cars, vacation homes, TVs the size of movie screens, kitchen gadgets that gather dust next to take out menus — whatever we desire, we buy and worry about paying for later.

Imagine what it must have been like in our parents' day when impulse buying meant putting it on layaway, or starting a Christmas club account in the hope of being able to buy it by Christmas. There was no plastic to whip out, and going to the bank for a loan was a step taken only for the greatest of emergencies. In all my childhood, I don't ever remember us having an emergency that great.

I think that's why our parents dressed up to go to the bank. It was a special occasion. My mother was in her finest, as was I, the day she brought me to the bank to open my first savings account from the tip-money customers.

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Elise Patkotia, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Parallels* Logio, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd., a writing/graphics company.

And now you'll have to excuse me spending the money.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

ROUNDBOUTS WILL BE TRUE TEST FOR...

Alaska drivers

BECAUSE WE do not sell automobile insurance, own a body shop or regularly drive on Dowling Road, count us among the amused at the prospect of not a single, but a double roundabout where the road crosses beneath the Seward Highway.

The roundabouts are part of a \$39 million upgrade along a 1 1/2-mile segment of Dowling Road. They are designed to replace traffic lights and increase the carrying capacity of the thoroughfare.

They are quite simple and are in use all over the world. Drivers enter the roundabout, built around a circular island — imagine a doughnut — and drive to their right until they come to their road and then they exit. Simple. But, of course, none of that takes into account Alaska drivers, who sometime see driving as a blood sport.

Roundabouts are not an entirely new concept here, but they will be perplexing nonetheless for people unused to anything but running stop signs and red lights. These folks will have to satisfy themselves in the future with just refusing to yield the right of way.

Education apparently helps and motorists need time to adjust. A roundabout already is in use at Southport and by all reports, while there was some frustration and driving craziness initially, eventually it sorted itself out.

PROponents say roundabouts are less expensive to build, greatly reduce the number of accidents at intersections and move more traffic in a shorter amount of time. A few years back, about 20,000 vehicles traveled on Dowling Road just east of the Seward Highway and engineers say the improvements will increase the road's capacity to about 45,000 a day, but even they are nervous about the prospect of Anchorage drivers careening into roundabouts.

Engineers set up a mock Dowling Road roundabout in a parking lot and drivers, even those maneuvering huge rigs, managed to circumnavigate the loop.

Opponents wonder how it will work in the winter and worry about what will happen when large trucks that need two lanes to enter the roundabout try to do so in rush hour traffic on icy roads. And don't the roundabouts really punch traffic flow?

Clearly, the roundabouts' success will depend upon the ability of Anchorage drivers to drive politely, merge and yield at the proper times. Those of us who drive the Seward and Glenn highways wonder, but we remind ourselves that even the French can manage roundabouts.

Motorists in the fall will get the chance to prove their mettle by driving into the belly of the beast. That leaves the faint-hearted more than enough time to find new ways to reach stores and work to avoid the problem altogether.

It also leaves enough time for a close inspection of automobile insurance policies. Considering what we see daily on the streets, it will be time well spent.

Things actually going well in Iraq

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Today the guns are silent. The entire world is quietly at peace. So said Douglas MacArthur in September 1945. Last week, seeing that quotation, now inscribed in stone at the new National World War II Memorial in Washington, I was struck, touched by its optimism.

And transience. The end of the war brought peace to Germany and Japan, which had been reduced to rubble. But that was the peace of the grave. There was no peace in Greece or China, where guerrilla war continued through the 1940s. There was tremendous civil unrest in France, where communist parties came very close to winning power. And then, of course, the post-colonial aftermath wars in India, Palestine, Indochina, Burma, and the list goes on.

A few days after my encounter with that MacArthur quotation, I read a brilliant British military historian John Keegan, skewering the commonplace and ahistorical idea — claiming World War II as a model — that wars end cleanly, neatly and completely. Keegan's article (London Daily Telegraph, June 1) detailed the bloody aftermath that continued for years after MacArthur's words on the battlefield in Missouri.

Keegan's larger point was controversial, however. "The British and American media retail with evident satisfaction every scrap of information" — bad war news, coalition soldiers' misconduct — that "undermines any expectation by readers and viewers of a successful outcome to the Iraqi involvement." That the transition from the coalition conquest of last April 9 to whatever new Iraq emerges will be difficult, bloody and contentious is the historical norm, argues Keegan. Yet it has been used by critics to discredit both the war and Bush and Blair for having undertaken it.

Keegan does not just know more history than all the sage Iraq critics combined. Within hours, his resistance to the Iraq panic sweeping Washington and London was looking prescient. The panic-mongers had been telling us that all was chaos that the June 30 date for the handover of power to an interim Iraqi government was approaching with



nothing but violence and bickering and no one to hand the reins to.

As of this week, we have an interim Iraqi government, remarkably balanced in terms of ethnicity, region and tribe. Such encouraging developments, however, are apparently not to be permitted to puncture the current delusion.

A moderate Shiite is appointed prime minister, and the headlines prominently mention that he was supported by the CIA, thus implicitly encouraging the notion that the man is illegitimate.

First of all, from where was an Iraqi exile, hunted by Saddam Hussein, to get help, if not from the CIA and MI6? From France? Germany? Russia? Kofi Annan? George Soros? Second, Ayad Allawi cooperated with the CIA in a mission that was entirely honorable (though, terribly bungled by the CIA) a coup to overthrow the Hussein dictatorship.

Then it is said that this new Iraqi government is illegitimate because it consists of just the old, discredited interim Iraqi Governing Council reappointing itself. In fact, the new government of 36 ministers contains just four from the Governing Council.

Then comes my favorite. The new government has no legitimacy because it is composed of so many exiles. What kind of political leadership does one expect in a country that endured three decades of Shi'ite tyranny in which any expression of opposition met with torture and death?

Strange. I do not remember any of these critics complaining about the universally hailed Oslo peace accords that

imposed upon the Palestinians a PLO government, born in from Yunnan composed nearly entirely of political exiles.

Ah, but Yasser Arafat, thug and terrorist, instantly was legitimacy in the eyes of Western intelligence because he is a self-proclaimed revolutionary, while Iraq's interim prime minister, who was nearly assed to death by Hussein's agents in London, is dismissed as an "exile."

Who better than these exiles — some rather heroic, many of whom created and sustained organized political opposition for decades — to run a transitional government? Note Transnational Union like the Palestinian Authority, a tyrannous kleptocracy that grabbed power and has not relinquished it for 10 years. This Iraqi government will be out of business in seven months. Its major function is to prepare elections, which will rally the rage of indigenous leaders who have emerged in the (by then) year and a half since the fall of Hussein.

Yes, Iraq is a mess. Postwar settlements almost invariably are. Particularly in a country where the removal of a totalitarian dictator leaves a total political vacuum. Of course there are difficulties and dangers ahead, and no guarantee of success. But the transition to Iraqi rule is underway. The first critical step has just been taken.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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ARE DEMOCRATS TRYING LEGISLATIVE ...

Blackmail?

THE SADDEST aspect of the latest carping by Alaska's Democratic legislators is that it reveals how truly low their vision of service has sunk.

Do what's best for Alaska? Forget it.

Do anything to obstruct what needs to be done? You bet.

These Democratic lawmakers inadvertently showed their hole cards, and disclosed how shallow they have become.

They are being called back in special session to deal with several specific pieces of legislation that have been placed on the agenda by the governor — which is precisely a constitutional procedure for such matters.

Are they willing to address those issues, and vote them up or down on the merits as they see them? Apparently not.

They demanded that the governor include in his special session call a request that the Legislature renew oil taxes. Since he did not, well, the implication is clear. Maybe they'll holla up the works, trying to force this political agenda item into the debate over Gov. Mulrow's call for a fiscal plan.

Pardon us if we say this smacks of legislative blackmail, far removed from legislative responsibility.

How small-minded can these people be? How short-sighted can they be? Their failure to comprehend the challenges Alaska faces apparently knows no bounds.

WHETHER THEY recognize it or not, the world's big oil companies are not rushing to Alaska to invest billions of more dollars in the search for new petroleum reserves.

Whether they understand the reality of it or not, Alaska's major oil fields are in decline. Whether they have looked recently or not, the number of barrels of oil flowing through the trans-Alaska pipeline are far below what they were years ago.

Yet in the face of this, our Democratic legislators want to change the deal that the state made with the oil companies to get them to make investments here.

Raise the taxes on the oil companies, the Democrats prattle. We need a bigger share, they complain. Big Oil makes big bucks. We need to make Bigger Bucks.

What they overlook, of course, is that Alaska already has reaped billions from its partnership with the oil companies. And they ignore the almost certain reality that higher taxes on oil production here will simply result in the major firms investing their exploration dollars in other places in the world.

The Democrats are gripped by the same fever that burns in the hearts of too many Alaskans when it comes to Permanent Fund dividends. Gimmie, gimmie, gimmie. And to hell with what's good for the long-term future of the state.

Key to effective cure is correct diagnosis

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Bill Cosby's May 17 remarks at a Washington, D.C., gathering commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court decision continues to draw controversy and debate. That's good. Some of the debate highlights a point made by my colleague Dr. Thomas Sowell.

"Bill Cosby and the black 'leadership' represent two long-standing differences about how to deal with the problems of the black community. The leaders are concerned with protecting the image of blacks, while Cosby is trying to protect the future of blacks, especially those of the younger generation."

Let's compare and contrast the tenor of Cosby's comments with an example of one made by a black "leader." You decide which class of comments is more helpful to the black community.

Cosby: "With names like Shaniqua, Taliqua and Mohammed and all of that crap, and all of them

are in jail. Brown vs. the Board of Education is no longer the white person's problem. We have to get to take the neighborhood back. We have to go in there — far

get about telling your child to go into the Williams Peace Corps — it is right around the corner. They are scared, and they can't speak English."

And on teen sex, Cosby said, "Hey, you have a baby when you are 12, your baby turns 13 and has a baby. How old are you? Huh? Grandmother!" By the time you are 12, you can have sex with your grandmother, you keep those numbers coming. I'm just predicting."

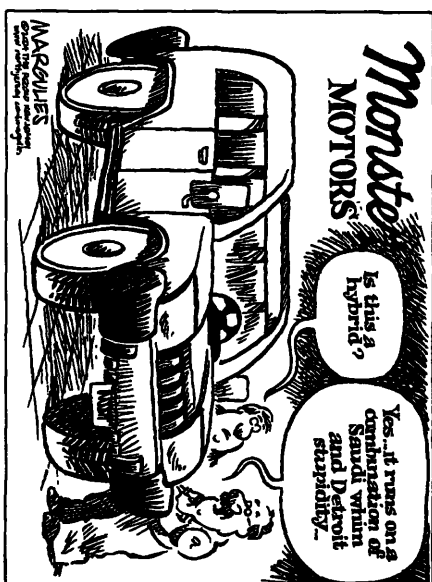
Cosby went on to say, "What is it — young girls getting after a girl who wants to remain a virgin? Who are these sick black people, and where do they come from, and why haven't they been prevented to shut up? This is a sick, lame and gentleman."



Contrast the gist of these remarks to those of Julian Bond, NAACP chairman, to the group's 94th annual convention. Republicans appeal "to the dark university of American culture, to the minority of Americans who reject democracy and equality." Bond added, "They preach racial neutrality and promote racial division. Their idea of reparations is to give war criminal Jefferson Davis a pardon."

Cosby's comments, as well as others he made, show that he's willing to address the pressing problems of the black community, as opposed to Bond's grandstanding on the behalf of the Democratic Party. Black people will accomplish much more by focusing on the issues of crime, illegitimacy, poor parenting and slovenly behavior than worrying about whom the Republican Party is appealing to and racial discrimination.

It's really a matter of diagnosis. In medicine, the key to effective treatment is correct diagnosis. If one presents to a physician with chronic fatigue, and the physician incorrectly diagnoses it as caused by the patient's toenail fungus, he can treat the toenail fungus until he can treat the chronic fatigue.



The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

MURKOWSKI'S SPECIAL SESSION IS ...

Worth trying

GOV. FRANK MURKOWSKI'S call for a special session on June 22 was a bold attempt to force legislators to deal with important business left undone when they adjourned on May 11.

The governor has written an ambitious agenda for a session expected to last just a few days. Up for consideration will be a long-term fix for the state's fiscal gap, a spending limit, bond propositions for needed transportation facilities, a tobacco tax and a workers' compensation bill. And Democrats would like to add a measure to increase oil taxes, which would almost certainly reduce Alaska's attraction as a place for industry investments.

Murkowski would like to see a fiscal fix that converts the Permanent Fund to an endowment, which would limit spending of earnings to 5 percent of the fund's total value, and allocate that 5 percent to spending for state services and individual dividend payments.

Murkowski said he is flexible on how the earnings are allocated, but considers it important that dividends be protected and that "a reasonable portion of the fund's earnings are available to maintain essential public services, like education."

IF APPROVED, the measure would assure that some fund earnings are finally used to pay state expenses, a long overdue change. Though the Legislature could now use earnings for such a purpose, it has instead been drawing down the Constitutional Budget Reserve established years ago with windfall cash from settlement of oil price disputes with North Slope oil producers.

The day of reckoning is obviously coming and the state necessarily will dip into the Permanent Fund earnings account to pay for its operations. Murkowski notes that the earnings fund now contains \$4 billion, all of which could be spent under current law. That is far more than the \$1.4 billion that would be available if a 5 percent limitation were in effect.

One motivation for the governor appears to be that approving a fiscal fix this year would allow it to be put before voters in the November election.

Legislators will gather in Juneau as ordered. But whether they will comply with the governor's wishes is an open question. Many have said privately that they are reluctant to vote for using any Permanent Fund earnings for state government in an election year.

They fear that their opponents will claim they are jeopardizing dividend payments, though a well-written fiscal fix could actually protect the state's free-money program.

It's a possibility, however, that the Legislature will accede to the governor's wishes in the special session. And considering the importance of a long-term fix to the fiscal gap, the return to Juneau is well worth trying.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Sunday, June 13, 2004 J-3

Next Sunday, friends, it's really summer

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

SUMMER OFFICIALLY begins in Alaska next Sunday at precisely 4:57 p.m. Which means this coming weekend will bring us the longest days of the year. Sorry to say, right after that the days start getting shorter — pell-mell! The years also lived in Anchorage before departing for Florida's sunny coast.

THERE WAS SUMMER joy aplenty 11 days ago as three priests of the Archdiocese of Anchorage celebrated the 25th anniversary of their ordination. The three — Fathers Leo Dessio, Daniel Hebert and Michael Shields — celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Patrick Church.

With Archbishop Roger Schwetz, retired Archbishop Francis Hurley, Bishop Michael Vio, and Father Michael Vio, all of Juneau, and an altar full of some 20 of their fellow priests.



Tobin

and Hebert came to Anchorage in 1972 as members of the Brothers of Charity of the Immaculate Heart and were later invited to study for the priesthood by the late Most Rev. Joseph Ryan, the first archbishop of Anchorage. Father Dessio was ordained on April 28, 1979, in his hometown of Winnetka, Ill. He has served at St. Patrick, Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Bernard in Talkeetna, St. Mary at Kotlik, and St. Andrew in Eagle River. Since 1989, he has been pastor of St. Michael in Palmer. Father Hebert, ordained May 5, 1979, in his home parish in Kankakee, Ill., has been pastor of Holy Cross parish since 2001. He previously served at Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Patrick, St. Joseph in Cordova, and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Father Shields, a native of Anchorage and a 1989 graduate of West High, was ordained at Holy Family Cathedral on June 2, 1979. Since 1994, he has been head of the Ministry of Divine Blessing in Magdalen, Russia. He previously served



"By now you still want the 'voice of the day'?"

at St. Anthony, St. Francis Xavier in Valdez, and St. Michael in Palmer.

WHILE ON THE subject, the archdiocese will open on the St. Patrick campus in August the St. Vincent House of Discernment, a residence for young men contemplating priesthood, for the priesthood. The name honors the patron saint of the priest, St. John Vianney, who lived in the remote French hamlet of Ars in the first half of the 19th century. The archdiocese already has two seminarians, Eric Weisman and Barry Fabyshyn.

ACADEMIC KUDOS: Thomas Busch, general manager of the nation's oldest Catholic radio station, KNOM, in Nome, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at Boston College's commencement exercises a couple of weeks ago. Another honoree was the commencement speaker, Tom Busch, anchor of "Meet the Press" and author of the new bestseller, "Big Boys and Big Guns."

Busch, a native of Philadelphia, graduated from BC in 1969 with a degree in psychology and moved to Nome in 1970 as a volunteer engineer to build KNOM, now a 25,000-watt, 24-hour-a-day station at 780 on the AM dial. The station added an 88-watt FM simulcast operation to its lineup in 1983, broadcasting at 96.1. It has won a bouquet of state and national honors, including last year's Crystal Award for Excellence in Community Service from the National Association of Broadcasters.

AND TIP YOUR bonnet, please, to the Anchorage Opera, which is sponsoring two summer camps for youngsters between the ages of 6 and 15. The first, "Create an Opera" for those 6 to 10, will be offered in two sessions, all this week from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and again June 21-25, at the same times, and both at Pacific Northern Academy. For the older opera-fans-to-be, there will be a single four-week "Production and Performance" — I Can Do That! session, July 5-30 at the same PNA site. The deputy director of Anchorage Opera, Cecelia Schreyer, is in charge. There are fees attached, \$100 per session for the younger group, and \$350 for the older group.

MEANWHILE, OPERATION Northern Edge, an annual Alaskan Command training exercise, winds down this week. More than 9,000 soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen and Coast Guard men and women have been involved. Participating were eight ships of the USS John C. Stennis Carrier Battle Group. The carrier, home-ported in San Diego, was the flagship. Mr. Big, heading the guided missile destroyers USS Howard and the USS Mitsui, the guided missile frigates USS Ford and the USS Lathrop, the guided missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain, the replenishment ship USS Replenishment, and the Coast Guard Cutter Rush. The carrier operated in the Gulf of Alaska during the exercises. The other ships, in addition to their Northern Edge drills, made separate weekend port of call visits to Anchorage, Seward, Kodiak, Homer and Valdez.

ELSEWHERE ON military matters, the Arctic Thunder 2004 Air Show is scheduled at Elmendorf June 28-29, and sponsors won't be at all surprised if crowds surpass last year's record attendance of 145,000. It will be a Y'all come display of fireworks, a number of dazzling aerial demonstrations by daring stunt pilots, and breathtaking performances by the Navy's Blue Angels. The Thunderdarts will open each day at 9 a.m., and the air show will end about 5 o'clock each afternoon.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOSIN
Senior Editor

BLM MAKES GOOD MOVE ON ...

NPR-A leasing

FEDERAL LAND MANAGERS are proposing to open a promising area in the northeast corner of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska to oil and gas drilling.

The Bureau of Land Management seeks to make another 387,000 acres of the huge reserve available for oil and gas leasing. The bureau reported such an offering would increase the potential of open acreage from 600 million barrels of recoverable oil to 2.1 billion barrels, when the new acreage is added.

The proposal looks like a good one that would benefit both the state's economy and the nation's energy picture. It is controversial with environmentalists because the area contains sensitive waterfowl and wildlife habitat, especially the area around Teshekpuk Lake.

The importance of the area to birds and animals — and for the subsistence hunters who harvest them — will be a critical consideration in deciding what the rules for development will be. But petroleum operations in sensitive areas have been conducted successfully for generations, both here and in Lower 48 states where oil and gas are found beneath vital habitat.

We hope the federal land managers will opt for thoughtful approaches to development and move ahead with well-considered limitations rather than cave in to the demands of environmentalists, many of whom would prefer nothing happen.

Experts say NPR-A contains somewhere between 5.9 billion and 13.2 billion barrels of recoverable oil. How much of that potential can be realized will depend on where it is located and the cost of drilling, producing and transporting the oil. Hopefully, new technologies and previous experience will enable a large portion of NPR-A to be used on the purpose for which it was created.

The Bureau of Land Management is moving in the right direction on oil and gas development in NPR-A. We wish it the best of luck in future struggles with the opposition.

It's important for Alaska and the nation that resources like those beneath NPR-A be made available for public use.

The complainers

SOME PEOPLE with too much time on their hands are complaining about the flood of kind words generated about Ronald Reagan after his death.

Several point out that Reagan did not single-handedly end the Cold War or rescue the American economy, nor did he revolutionize government or tear down the Berlin Wall by himself. To Fidel Castro, who said he wished Reagan had never been born, we say: Give up on it, guy. You lost. Now shorten up those speeches and send us a box of cigars.

To that nasty cartoonist who suggested that the ex-president is now in Hell, we say: We look forward to your arrival there and are confident you won't see Ronald Reagan. And to all the rest, we say: Get a life.

Reagan critics trying to look good

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

The second-greatest president of the 20th century dies (with Theodore Roosevelt coming a close third), and the liberal establishment that alternately ridiculed and demonized Ronald Reagan throughout his presidency is in a quandary.

How to remember a man they sanctified for eight years but who enjoyed both the overwhelming affection of the American people and decisive vindication by history? They found their way to do it. They dwell endlessly on the man's smile, his sunny personality, his good manners. Above all, his optimism.

Optimism is the perfect way to trivialize everything that Reagan was or did. Pangloss was an optimist. Harold Stassen was an optimist. Ralph Kruttschnitt was an optimist. Optimism is nice, but it gets you nowhere unless you also possess ideological vision, policy and prescriptions to make it real, and, finally, the political courage to act on your convictions.

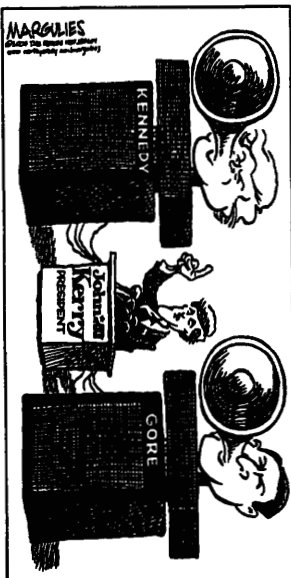
Optimism? Every other person on the No. 6 bus is an optimist. What distinguished Reagan was what he did and said. Reagan was optimistic about America and the American and general respect of the post-Vietnam era because he believed unfashionably that America was both great and good — and had been needlessly diminished by restrictive economic policies and timid foreign policies. Change the policies and America would be restored, both at home and abroad. He was right.

Moreover, at the time, Reagan's optimism was deemed pejorative. It was the cockeyed optimism of the simpleton, a man too shallow, unsophisticated, unschooled and unthinking — in short, too stupid — to know better. An "amiable dupe," as Clark Clifford, wisest of the Washington wise men, dubbed him. Justin Kaplan's 1992 edition of Bartlett's has only three quotes from Reagan — all trivial, all designed to make him look silly. It was only under pressure that the next edition added "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall" and other historic lines.

Clifford and Kaplan spoke for an establishment that considered Reagan a simplistic primitive — whose simplistic primitivism was endangering the world.

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These were the twin themes Reagan was stupid, and his stupidity made him dangerous. Those too young to remember the 1980s would be astonished to know how common the notion was of Reagan as a warmonger.

In the early 80s, the West experienced a nuclear hysteria — a sudden panic about imminent nuclear destruction and a mindless demand to "freeze" nuclear weapons. What had changed to bring this on? Reagan had become president. Lake George W. Bush today, the U.S. president was seen as a greater threat to peace than was the enemy he was confronting.

The nuclear freeze and the accompanying hysteria are an embarrassment that liberals prefer to forget today. Reagan's critics completely misunderstood the hope and the power of the nuclear posture. He took a very hard line on the Soviets, who had broken the nuclear status quo by placing missiles in Europe. Backed by Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl, Reagan faced the Soviets down — despite enormous "peace" demonstrations throughout the West, including the largest, one to date in U.S. history (New York City, 1982) — and ultimately forced the Soviets to dismantle the missiles and begin their overall retreat.

Rarely has a president been so quickly and completely vindicated by history. The Berlin Wall came down 10 months after Reagan left office. His policies of unremitting toughness won the Cold War and brought a new peace. That is

because Reagan understood that the key to peace was never arms control. Security had nothing to do with the number of weapons, it had everything to do with the intention and power of those who possessed them.

Accordingly, Reagan put relentless pressure on the possessors of that power, the Soviet communists, through his nuclear, hard line, military buildup, Strategic Defense Initiative and the Reagan Doctrine of supporting anti-communist guerrillas everywhere (especially Nicaragua). Ultimately, that pressure brought about the collapse of the overextended Soviet empire. The result was the most prolonged peace the world had experienced in 60 years — since the very beginning of the totalitarian era in the early 1930s.

This success is an understandable embarrassment to the critics who opposed his every policy. They supported the freeze, denounced the military buildup, ridiculed strategic defenses, opposed and to the Nicaraguan anti-communists and derided Reagan for telling the truth about the Soviet empire.

So now they praise his sunny smile. Normally, people speak well of the recently deceased to honor the dictum of being kind to the dead. When Reagan's opponents speak well of him now, however, they are trying to be kind to themselves.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

REAGAN'S LEGACY IN . . .

His own words

SEN. JIM MURKOWSKI has provided a reminder of what Ronald Reagan himself hoped would be his legacy. She concluded her own tribute to the nation's 40th president by quoting from a speech he made to the 1982 Republican National Convention. These were his words:

"My fellow citizens — those of you here in this hall and those of you at home — I want you to know that I have always had the highest respect for you, for your common sense and intelligence and for your decency. I have always believed in you and in what you could accomplish for yourselves and for others."

"And whatever else history may say about me when I'm gone, I hope it will record that I appealed to your best hopes, not your worst fears, to your confidence rather than your doubts. My dream is that you will travel the road ahead with liberty's lamp guiding your steps and opportunity's arm steadying your way."

"My fondest hope for each one of you — and especially for the young people here — is that you will love your country, not for her power or wealth, but for her selflessness and her idealism. May each of you have the heart to conceive, the understanding to direct, and the hand to execute works that will make the world a little better for your having been here."

"May all of you as Americans never forget your heroic origins, never fail to seek divine guidance, and never lose your natural, God-given optimism."

These are noble thoughts.

These are rich words.

These are the heartfelt convictions of a man whose place in history will be high among the great presidents of the United States.

A prayer for battle

THOSE WHO GET churned up in their effort to remove any signs of religion from our society, or any mention of the Almighty as we go about our daily business, got a reminder of the nation's reliance on spiritual support as the 60th anniversary of D-Day was observed last Sunday.

Among the many items that help us remember that historic day was Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's message to the Allied forces as they embarked for Normandy and the assault on Fortress Europe. Said Ike to his troops:

"The free men of the world are marching together to victory. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than victory!"

"Good luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking."

Nobody went to court, thank God, to try to force Eisenhower to withdraw or amend his message.

Important to the Nation and Alaska

Excerpt from a Tuesday speech on the U.S. Senate floor by Sen. Ted Stevens on the death of former President Ronald Reagan.

In 1977, I was elected to the Senate leadership and served as assistant minority leader until the 1980 election. At the time, I don't think anyone could have predicted the sweeping changes that were about to take place when Ronald Reagan was elected, he ushered in a new era of government, so profound that it has become known as the "Reagan Revolution."

That was an exciting time in Washington. I became assistant majority leader and began a new life, really. Howard Baker was the majority leader, and the day before I was to marry my wife Catherine, Howard called and asked me to replace him on a trip to China because Deng Xiaoping wanted to understand what "Reaganism" meant.

My wife, Catherine, and I were married on Dec. 30 and we left for China on Dec. 31. To prepare for these talks, I reviewed all of President Reagan's actions as governor of California and his promises during the election. I was honored to explain and defend his record.

Stevens

Much has been said about the mark President Reagan left on our national defense and foreign policy — those were some of his greatest contributions as president, and I viewed those decisions from a unique vantage point. I was sworn in as chairman of the Senate's Defense Appropriations subcommittee just days before President Reagan took the oath of office and he immediately began to move us toward a 600-ship Navy, new aircraft development, and a space-based missile defense system.

President Reagan understood that the first thing we had to do was restore our military capability. The Soviets were outgunning us and stealing our secrets and he took control of that situation.

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tion. In the years since President Reagan left office, either Senator Inouye or I have been Chairman of Defense Appropriations and both of us have carried forth the vision he had for our military.

On June 12, 1987, President Reagan inspired all of us to envision a new world when he gave his famous speech at the Brandenburg Gate. I will never forget the image of President Reagan standing before that gate demanding that Communism "tear down this wall!" Weeks before he gave that speech, the president learned that his remarks would be carried in East Germany over the radio and in one part of the speech he spoke directly to the people in the East. One can only imagine the hope those people on the other side of that wall must have felt when they heard the President of the United States declare in their native tongue, "There is only one Berlin."

Under Ronald Reagan, the freeze on the transfer of Alaskan lands to our state and the Alaska Native people was finally lifted and we began to receive the land that rightfully belonged to us. President Reagan instructed the Department of Interior to move as quickly as possible on that. I don't think it would have happened had he not been elected.

Under President Reagan, the Village Built Clinic Program began and we set out to establish Indian Health Services clinics in every village. Under President Reagan, we finally addressed the injustices of Alutian internment during World War II by awarding reparations to Alutians who had been taken from their homes and sent to "tuleen villages" in Southeast Alaska. And President Reagan understood Alaska's military and geo-political significance better than any other president. The modernization of Alaska's military bases accelerated during his administration.

What most Alaskans probably remember best about President Reagan was how well he understood our state and our way of life. When he came to Fairbanks to meet Pope John Paul II, he told the crowd that every time he came to Alaska he thought of the poet Robert Service and threatened to recite "The Shooting of Dan McGrew."

In fact, he did just that: one night when Catherine and I were attending a dinner in Chicago. We had just flown in from Fairbanks and I told the crowd that the 20 degree weather in the harsh weather back home where the temperature was 50 below. Ronald Reagan got up to give his remarks and recited Robert Service's poem "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" from memory.

"When out of the night, which was fifty below, and unto the day and the glare, There stumbled a maver fresh from the creek, dog-dirty, and loaded for bear."

One of my fondest memories of President Reagan is a phone call I received from him when I was chairman of the Senate's Defense Appropriations subcommittee. The president called to ask me if I had placed funding in the defense bill to procure a new Air Force One. I told him that I had. President Reagan told me that he had not requested the funding and would veto the bill.

He said, "Ted, I'm the president." And I said, "Sir, I understand, but you won't be president by the time the new plane arrives." There was silence on the other end of the line and the president asked, "Ted, do you have a design for this plane?"

Ted Stevens represents Alaska in the U.S. Senate.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Editor

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Thursday, June 10, 2004 **B-7**

LET THERE BE . . .

Sweet music

A SPECIAL CONCERT is on tap this Saturday evening, one that deserves more than a passing note in this music-minded community.

Those you will find with violins in their hands are not professionalists in the art of classical or contemporary music. You'll not find them on the Performing Arts Center stage. Rather, they are musicians engaged in the task of getting their lives back together — finding music as a way to earn reentry into society.

This concert will be held in the Hilland Mountain Correctional Center. The performance will be by members of the institution's Women's String Orchestra.

Pati Croft, a local musician, generated the idea of forming the orchestra among Hilland Mountain inmates, and Jackie Davis, music conductor at Service High School, volunteered as the orchestra leader. The mistress of ceremonies for the performance will be Dana Stabenow, noted crime fiction writer.

Tickets are \$50, and the hope is that as many as 200 people will attend. For details, call Ms. Croft at 246-6806.

Good hire

IT IS ALWAYS refreshing when the good of the state outweighs political considerations when it comes to adding members of an administration.

In this case, Gov. Frank Murkowski's Department of Revenue has rehired Larry Persily, who worked in Revenue for six years as a special assistant and then deputy commissioner in the administration of then-Gov. Tony Knowles. He was let go shortly after Murkowski won election. In his new capacity, Persily will be working as a special assistant to Commissioner William Corbus.

Persily, who most recently wrote prolifically at the "Petroleum News," is well acquainted with the ins and outs of journalism and government, and has developed an expertise in oil- and gas-related issues that will be of more than a little value to state government.

He is well known in and out of government for his quick wit and sometimes acerbic humor, and he has deservedly won a reputation for being thorough, hard-working and prepared.

Putting political considerations aside in hiring Persily was the right thing to do, for the administration and the state. The governor and Commissioner Corbus are to be congratulated.

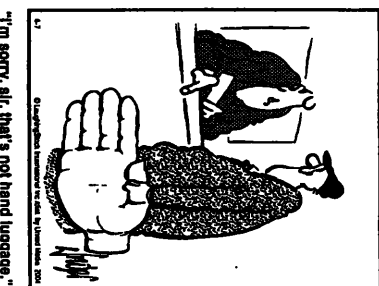
Call 911 for the language police

By TOM BRENNAN

The language is under assault once again. And the risk of confusion is real. If not downright dangerous.

For one thing, since the term liberal is widely considered an epithet, the left wingers want to be known as "progressives."

And now some misguided journalists, apparently led astray by that bastion of bad linguistic influence, the BBC, are increasingly referring to environmentalists as "conservationists."



"I'm sorry, sir, that's not hand luggage."

That is a line that should not be crossed. In my book, the word environmentalist is indeed unaged and refers to a monkey wrench into the world's economy. Conservationist, on the other hand, is a positive term used by outdoor groups before the extremists gained control of the movement.

If we let the liberals call themselves progressives, we should certainly let conservatives call themselves by some loaded word like "thoughtful." That has a nice ring to it and suggests that conservatives use their heads instead of whatever the liberals use. And don't say it's their hearts, I have another body part in mind.

Brennan

Such name changes, if they pull them off, will only help in the short term. If their behavior remains the same, they will bring the same bad reputation to the new name as they earned for the old.

For instance, if the green extremists bring the same anger, petulance and adamant opposition against any large human project, to the name conservationist, they will tinge that word as well.

That would be a real shame because the old-time conservationists were known for compromise and trying to steer progress into positive directions — away from environmental problems — instead of trying to block it. I was a conservationist, still am for that matter, though battling with the ac-

tivists for 30 years and more has taken some of the bloom off that rose. The old-time conservationists were members of groups like Ducks Unlimited and the old National Wildlife Federation (before NWF was taken over by activists with a more ambitious agenda.) And in Alaska we have the Alaska Waterfowl Association, which successfully lobbied to protect almost 800,000 acres of Cook Inlet marshland.

That was achieved in the early 1970s and involved oil lobbyist Hank Rosenthal, who rolled industry representatives in Juneau while Rep. Mike Herberger, a stalwart outdoorsman, beat on the doors of his fellow legislators. And the Audubon Society provided moral support.

Many of the sensible conservationists are still members of such groups and most are dismayed by what the new crowd has done to a once noble movement.

Perhaps it's a good sign that the extremists are beginning to realize they've developed a bad reputation — if they have actually realized it. Eventually they just might try to do more than just change their descriptive, say by

making a more constructive approach to influencing big projects that would help people.

That will certainly take a while. For the moment, they are in the driver's seat in Congress and many state legislatures, and they are adored by too many major news media. They have parlayed mass hysteria over green worries into a major political movement and captured the hearts of vote-hungry politicians everywhere.

But their tactics will eventually wear thin with those people as well, especially if the price of energy becomes unaffordable and the economy tanks. That would be a costly lesson, but the problem has been growing since the dawn of the modern environmental movement. Much of what the movement has accomplished has been very beneficial for the planet. The problem is with its increasing militance and undermining attacks against every large project that comes along.

The movement has become a haven for angry young people whose ambitions seem more to find ways to vent their anger than to do any real good. Admittedly, my attitude has become jaded by wrestling with the rascals so long, but I don't think I'm exaggerating.

A liberal friend who threw a hasty fit about one of my recent John Kerry columns asked me how I became so conservative. He knew me when I arrived in Alaska in 1967 and said he considered me a moderate. I told him that wrestling with the left for more than three decades has pushed me further to the right.

Actually I consider myself fairly moderate, at least moderately moderate. I hunt, fish, hike, shoot and own a hunting dog. I also confess to being a Republican and have been one since 1968.

In these days my political philosophy was "Anybody except Lyndon Johnson." Nowadays I like and support candidates like George W. Bush and Lisa Murkowski.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Wednesday, June 9, 2004 B-7

DAILY NEWS HAS CHANGE OF HEART ABOUT ...

Wev Shea

THERE IS VERY GOOD news for those poor souls awaiting political rehabilitation after being slapped around by the usual suspects on the left.

Wev Shea, a candidate for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Sen. Lisa Murkowski, apparently has made the grade. When he was acting U.S. attorney for Alaska in the early 1990s, Shea was a target of the Anchorage Daily News, which said of him on Nov. 16, 1992, "It was hard to figure out how Wev Shea surfaced as a nominee for U.S. attorney in the first place, given his background in mostly business litigation."

The newspaper wondered in an editorial why he was unconfirmed for two years, but noted, "In the meantime, members of Mr. Shea's own staff complained to federal agencies that he subjected them to favoritism, sexism and ungrateful rages."

"Surely, Alaska deserves better."

He clearly was not one of their favorites. But that apparently changed recently when he joined with the News in being "appalled" at the Alaska Republican Party's defense of its embattled chairman and said he was tossing his hat into the Senate race in protest.

WELL, NOW the paper paints quite a different picture than in 1992. It said recently in a positively glowing editorial that Shea is a "traditionalist and a heartfelt conservative — a Navy veteran, a drug warrior, a Clinton antagonist," a lawyerly constitutionalist. "He is, the editorial said, a 'man of principles — like them or not — and conviction.'"

No mention, it should be noted, of the "favoritism, sexism, eccentric office management and unpredictable rages" he was accused of by three of his ex-employees mentioned in a Daily News story in April 1991.

By any standards, between then and now, the newspaper has undergone quite an editorial sea change regarding Shea. Apparently bygone are bygones.

The political rehabilitation of those who fail to pass ideological muster with the left is always tricky and ever so quirky. More often than not, however, if it is expedient to the liberal cause, sinners are forgiven, regardless of the transgressions. Shea's case illustrates that the quickest path to redemption involves embracing anything that can be viewed as detrimental to Republicans — especially when it deals with the upcoming Senate race, the current center of the left's political universe.

Just think, if Arctic the Hun wound up at odds with the Republicans, he, too, could be rehabilitated. Instead of a savage warrior and conqueror, he could become a noted explorer, urban planner and military expert, a guy with principles. No kidding.

Mosquitoes and good people abound

By ELISE PATKOTAK

A few days ago, I received a call from a stranger. He said he'd found my phone number on a check that had been inadvertently left behind at a store in the Diamond Center. Apparently, the young man to whom I had issued the check had forgotten it on the counter there.

The young man's mother is currently searching for the aliens who sucked most of his brains out when he hit his teens. She's pretty sure that has to be the reason for such a major lapse on his part. Or, she suggested, he was just being 16.

The gentleman who called me had tried to call from his cell phone while he was still at the mall but his cell phone died. He took the time to copy the phone number down so he could call me when he got home. I thought about this man the other day as I wondered why I was living in a state where mosquitoes outnumber people 1 billion to one and most of those billion are in my back yard waiting for me to make an appearance.

Thinking about him eased the pain of discovering once again that in Alaska, after a long cold winter without the sun, we get to enjoy wonderful days full of morning, noon and nighttime sunshine only for so long as we are willing to do it from the comfort of that same living room window we stood at to curse the darkness. To actually go out in it would just chance running the Alaskan mosquito, a potentially suicidal move.

Last year I put one of those new fan-glied mosquito magnets in my back yard and I thought it worked pretty well. So this year I got it out early and, following the directions as far as I bothered to read, got it set up while there was still snow on the ground. The magnet works best when it starts early and gets the females who over-wintered under the snow. Having survived an



PATKOTAK



Alaskan winter, apparently nothing short of a nuclear blast now scares them.

In the process of setting up the mosquito magnet I found out a few things. For instance, I should have read all the directions, not just those found in the first two paragraphs. Had I done that, I would have found that at the end of last summer I needed to perform certain procedures before storing it for winter — procedures that would have encouraged it to actually work this year.

While I sat on the phone waiting for the mosquito magnet tech line to be picked up by a human being, I took the time to read all the instructions including those on the back page. With no worry that my absence would cause me to miss my turn in line, I would get up, leave the phone on hold, and go do things as I discovered them in the directions. Soon my mosquito magnet was working despite the sound of Musak still coming through the phone.

Now I thought my problems were solved and the mosquitoes would quickly disappear. I was wrong. It takes a while for the magnet to work its magic, and while waiting for that time period to be up, the mosquitoes were gunning on me.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

AMERICANS WILL DO THE REMEMBERING FOR...

Ronald Reagan

RONALD REAGAN was a towering figure of the 20th century. His death Saturday at 93 seemed to bring that turbulent era to a belated and bittersweet close.

Reagan was an unlikely player on the world stage, a B-movie actor with political aspirations. But the future president was an active participant in Republican Party events for years and gradually earned his credentials.

His credibility as a political leader was marginally improved when he was elected governor of California, our goofiest state. But when he reached for the White House, he quickly convinced Americans that he could both play a president on TV and do the job remarkably well.

Reagan was not a great intellect, but he surrounded himself with bright people as his advisers. He was called the great communicator, but his greatness was actually in his ability to inform and inspire, he could point out the correct path and convince his country and the Western World to take it.

His abilities in that area were matched in the 20th century only by Democratic President John F. Kennedy. But Reagan's beliefs were at the opposite end of the political spectrum from Kennedy's. In fact, one of his accomplishments was in gaining acceptance for conservative thinking in Washington. After him it was no longer essential for all Republicans to hug the political center, a requirement they had lived uncomfortably with for many years.

REAGAN helped steer the Cold War to a successful close and did so in a congenial style that allowed the two sides to reconcile and work together from the earliest years of the post-war period.

His most important domestic accomplishment may have been leading the charge against constantly growing government. He convinced Congress and the American people that continuing to feed the bureaucratic machine was detrimental to the people it was intended to serve. "Big government is not the solution," he said. "Big government is the problem."

Sadly, Reagan's final years were dimmed by Alzheimer's disease. He didn't recognize his loving wife and life's partner, Nancy, and he couldn't remember either his presidency or his historic achievements.

But, happily, the remembering will be done for him by the people of the nation he loved and led so well. Ronald Reagan changed his country and the world. They are better places for his being here.

Ronald Reagan changed his country and the world.

D-Day as covered by today's media

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

Here's how today's media might have covered D-Day, 60 years ago.

On the coast of France, June 6, 1944:

Hundreds of paratroopers have fallen wide of their target zone. In Washington, the Senate Armed Services Committee is demanding an explanation. The Army chief of staff may be called to testify.

The French village of Cerville has been destroyed by mortar fire from a U.S. infantry platoon. Four civilians were killed, including one elderly great-grandmother. German defenders had retreated hours before the American attack. Army intelligence failures are cited.

NBC Exclusive: Four bombs dropped by 8th Air Force raiders failed to explode when they fell in an empty field close to the village of Le Châtelier. An examination indicates the duds came from an Iowa munitions factory.

An unidentified Army corporal said additional defective bombs may already be aboard other U.S. bombers heading for France.

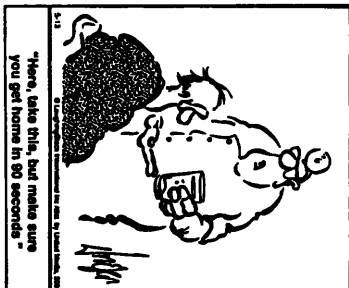
Thousands of American casualties were suffered today as troops poured on shore at Omaha Beach. (In Washington, a Nebraska congressman charged that many GIs were unprepared for what they encountered during the invasion. "Somebody needs to be held accountable," he said.)

Heavy Navy shelling from battleships and cruisers had little effect on Nazi gun emplacements running fire on U.S. forces, several correspondents at the scene reported. (In Washington, a World War I veteran intervened by a reporter questioned the value of troop support by warships, saying "the days of good inviolable in battles is long past.")

CBS Exclusive: Bombs falling on the tiny French village of Entenier killed all four cows on which residents depend for milk and cheese. Severe shortages are an interview by the young Army captain



Tobin



A 411-year-old church in the village of Marais was destroyed by Army artillery fire after a German sniper was detected shooting from the bell tower. The Vichy French government mayor of the town protested to advancing GIs, saying the sniper surely would have ceased firing had the American soldiers asked him to do so. He demanded an apology from Gen. Omar Bradley.

NBC Exclusive: In a report from Paris, residents here fear the Eiffel Tower might be destroyed by advancing American forces. "They probably do not appreciate the beauties of the City of Light," said Pierre Muidmond, the mayor appointed by occupying German forces. His sentiments were echoed by a number of Parisians and several Nazi SS officers interviewed while the Champs-Élysées.

A river near the French coast has been contaminated by fuel leaking from two disabled tanks that advancing GIs pushed over the side of a bridge. French puppet civic leaders questioned the need to clear the bridge by such drastic action, saying it appeared soldiers could have clung over the wreckage had it been left in place. Correspondents were denied an interview by the young Army captain

commanding troops in the area.

CBS Exclusive: American forces bogged down in the hedgerows of the French countryside have been calling for reinforcements to help escape unhelping German fire. Communication problems, however, have left commanders on the beach unaware that some of their troops are in a desperate situation. It makes you wonder whether their training was adequate — or even if there was any training at all.

On the home front:

As first battle reports indicated heavy casualties on Omaha Beach, a Republican leader addressing a Republican rally in Bloomington, Ind., told a group of snoring House members that the invasion losses are evidence that President Roosevelt is incompetent. The Indiana congressional delegation responded by saying it would begin bipartisan hearings to see whether Roosevelt had concealed information that the invasion would be more costly than expected.

In a panel discussion broadcast by NBC Radio, four White House correspondents provided illuminating insight into the difficulties being encountered by Allied forces in France. Jeremy Jelford, Washington Bureau chief of a small Midwest newspaper, said, "The decision to start the invasion this early in June is open to severe criticism. Gen. Eisenhower and his planners apparently failed to take into account that delaying this assault until August would have found much of the French population on a holiday and thus removed from the path of the fighting."

In Chicago, the Rev. Blaholy Ekmara, a noted peace activist, declared the violence taking place on the French battlefields "Apparently our government in Washington gave no thought to the possibility of negotiating with German leaders in an effort to resolve their differences," he said. "We seem to be blindly following Churchill's addiction for war." In London, the British prime minister is a new cigar and decided to respond.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TODIN
Editor

NPR-A LEASE SALE SHOWS ...

Signs of life

LAST WEEK'S \$54 million lease sale in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska was a welcome sign of new interest by the petroleum industry in Alaska's remote areas. Half of the sale proceeds will go to the federal government and half to the Alaska treasury, a nice little boost to the state's fiscal fortunes. All of the acreage offered was in the northeast section of NPR-A, a federal reservation the size of Indiana.

One of the most encouraging aspects of the sale was the strong interest in NPR-A leases by ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc., which spent \$13.7 million on 71 tracts, each of approximately 11,000 acres.

The investment by ConocoPhillips was especially encouraging because the company is one of the largest operating in Alaska. It has already conducted successful exploration efforts in NPR-A and its holdings include Alpine, a small but important oil field just outside its borders. ConocoPhillips is presumably one of the most knowledgeable companies in the world on NPR-A's potential.

The largest single bid was offered by Fortuna Exploration LLC, \$13.7 million for a tract near the Ikroavik River. Fortuna is a subsidiary of Talsman Energy Inc. of Calgary and a relative newcomer to Alaska. Talsman is a large independent formed in 1992 as a spinoff from BP and is currently a partner with French energy giant Total. Talsman drilled its first Alaska well earlier this year. Both Talsman and Total have indicated they are especially interested in NPR-A's oil and gas potential.

ALSO BIDDING in the sale were Anadarko Petroleum Corp., another independent with long experience in Alaska, Pioneer Natural Resources Alaska Inc., an Illinois independent that recently became active in coal bed methane development in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and Petro Canada Alaska Inc., a relatively large Canadian energy company based in Calgary.

With the exception of ConocoPhillips, the names of the new NPR-A leaseholders are not household names here, but they are all solid industry players and their bids suggest they are seriously interested in developing that corner of Alaska.

Active exploration cannot start on the leases until a judge rules on the merits of lawsuits by environmental groups demanding greater protection for wildlife habitat there.

But however that suit comes out, the situation there is rather encouraging as well. Environmental leaders maintain they do not want to block drilling in NPR-A altogether; they say their concern is only for adequate protection for some acreage that is especially critical to migrating waterfowl and other wildlife.

However these suits come out, the fact that serious industry players have put up serious money for promising acreage suggests that Alaska's oil patch is showing new signs of life.

Cosby's remarks catalyst for change

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

May 17 saw several gatherings commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1964 U.S. Supreme Court school desegregation decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education*. But the event held in Washington, D.C.'s Constitution Hall will be the one to be remembered because of Bill Cosby's remarks, which won him scathing criticism from some in the black community.

For years, I've argued that most of the problems many black Americans face today have little or nothing to do with racial discrimination. For the most part, the most devastating problems encountered by a large segment of the black community are self-inflicted.

Bill Cosby mentioned several of them, such as black parents who buy their children expensive clothing rather than something educational, poor language spoken by many children and adults, and criminals who prey on the overwhelmingly law-abiding residents of black neighborhoods.

After Cosby's remarks, some in the audience laughed and applauded, but, according to *The Washington Post*, the black "leadership" in attendance, the head of the NAACP legal defense fund and the president of Howard University were "stone-faced."



In a recent column, my colleague Thomas Sowell explained, "Bill Cosby and the black leadership represent two long-standing differences about how to deal with the problems of the black community. The leaders are concerned with protecting the image of blacks, while Cosby is trying to protect the future of blacks, especially those of the younger generation."

Bill Cosby and I differ in age by one year — I'm older. We both spent part of our youth, in the 1940s and 1950s, growing up in North Philadelphia's Richard Allen housing project. Being poor then was different from being poor



SENSELESS, WE'VE NO COLLATERAL DAMAGE DON'T GUILT UNLESS FIRST UPON FIRST AND DON'T DAMAGE ANY MORE SENSELESS, AND LET'S GO TO THE WALL.

My sister and I were rare among Richard Allen's residents. Our parents were separated, but nearly every other kid lived in a two-parent household. Black teen pregnancy was relatively rare and just a tiny fraction of today's. During those days, many residents rarely locked their doors until the last person came home. Hot summer nights saw many people peacefully sleeping in their yards or on their balconies.

Today, less than 40 percent of black children live in two-parent families, compared to 70 percent and 80 percent in earlier periods. Illegitimacy, at 70 percent, is unprecedented in black history. Between 1976 and 2000, over 80 percent of all homicides in the United States were committed by blacks, and 94 percent of the time the victim was black. These are devastating problems, but are they caused by racism, and will spending resources fighting racial discrimination solve them?

Don't give me any of that legacy-of-slavery nonsense unless you can explain why all of these problems were not worse during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, at a time when blacks were much closer to slavery than most poor, black, inner-city Americans.

With all the opportunities available today, unbelievable when Cosby and I were youngsters, black youngsters who dedicate themselves to academic excellence

are still being told they are not good enough. Bill Cosby is a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. He can be reached by email at bill@billcosby.com, 5777 W. Lees Ferry Road, Suite 700, Lees Ferry, AZ 86005, (919) 537-7000.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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TODAY WE HONOR AND THANK OUR...

D-Day heroes

SIXTY YEARS AGO today, at 12:15 a.m., paratroopers for American airborne units, the lead elements in the largest military operation in history, leaped into the dark from their planes to begin the end of World War II in Europe.

The Normandy invasion was scheduled for June 5, but had been delayed a day to await better weather. As the troops assembled, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, the commanding general in the battle for Europe, told them:

"Soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force: you are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months.

"The eyes of the world are upon you. The hope and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. No truer words have ever been spoken. Operation Overlord, which brought the war to French soil early that morning in 1944, was a calculated, go-for-broke gamble. To fail likely would have meant losing the war.

Airborne troops in a massive air assault landed in flooded areas at the base of the Cotentin Peninsula on the flanks of the beaches that would be used by the seaborne assault. Canadians went ashore at Juno Beach, the British at Gold and Sword beaches. The Americans stormed onto Utah Beach and the especially bloody Omaha Beach, where the First Division barely hung on by its fingernails before clawing its way slowly inland against withering fire from German defenders.

IN THE INVASION that was the beginning of the end for Adolf Hitler's demented vision for the world, more than 3,000 Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen lost their lives. In the weeks and months to follow, 425,000 Allied and German troops were killed, wounded or reported missing, although the exact number remains lost to history. More than 110,000 of them are buried in 27 cemeteries scattered in Europe.

In more than just a casual sense, those brave men who stormed Europe that day six decades ago likely saved the world, at least as we know it today. It is hard begging to consider what would have happened if they had failed. They, indeed, carried with them the hopes and dreams of liberty-loving people. They carried with them the future.

It is these men we honor today, the ones who had the courage to leap from planes into the blackness or inch their way across bullet-raked beaches or ride gliders into the unknown to take the war inland to Germany, freeing millions and relighting the lamp of freedom along the way.

Nowadays, too many, too often forget how much we as a nation owe those who were a part of the historic invasion. Too many, too often forget that these heroes of long ago are in large part why we are free.

They have earned, and deserve, our respect and our undying gratitude.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

An invitation to join a bold new society

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

THE REGULAR four-month session of the 2004 Alaska Legislature is behind us, along with all the acrimony that it generated. Now a special session is ahead of us. Even recognizing that Gov. Frank Murkowski listed some important issues for legislators to consider when they return to Juneau in a couple of weeks, it's not altogether improper to suggest this state really could use fewer days in which politicians hold center stage. Let's hereby form Lesser Government Inc. — or LGI, in this acronym-filled world of ours.

TO BECOME a full-fledged member of LGI, you only need to correctly answer two questions: "Do we really need a Legislature that meets for four months every year?" "Do we actually need a Municipal Assembly that meets every week?"

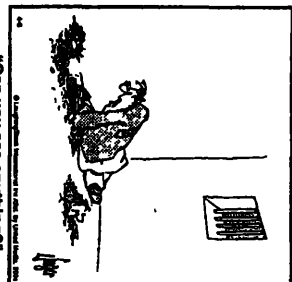
THOSE QUESTIONS prompt two others: "Isn't the government capable of running the state all by itself for a year without 60 legislators hanging around for a third of the year?" "Can't the mayor manage the city without having to deal with the Assembly week after week?"



Tobin

THERE IS NO cost to join LGI. There are no dues. All that's needed is an awareness that maybe, just maybe, government might work very well without constant, unrelenting tinkering with existing laws or trying to make new ones.

WOULD ALASKA fall into an abyss if for one year the Legislature didn't convene? Couldn't we somehow survive with only the laws already on the books? As for the city, countless ordinances already are in place. The street lights work. The trash is picked up. The flowers are planted. The streets get new summer lane stripes. The snow will be plowed when winter rolls around again. Would all of this unravel were the Assembly gone a month off, two or three times a year?



"Can you see anything?"

IF LGI HAD its way, the cost of government would be a lot less without the Legislature and the Assembly in constant session. You could easily chalk up savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars in paper alone, eliminating the need to copy tons of bills, ordinances, memos and legal opinions. There also would be a major lowering of stress, emotional trauma, tension, public anger, and despair — conditions associated with legislative sessions and Assembly meetings. Peace and quiet may be worth even more than dollars.

ONE OF THE underpinnings of Lesser Government Inc. is the knowledge that we already are awash in laws — surely enough to keep the state running on an even keel for at least a year before another set of lawmakers descends on Juneau to stir things up again. Data for the city.

WHEN THE Alaska Constitution was approved by the people of the territory 48 years ago, a much-acclaimed purpose was to give the new state the most powerful governor in the land. He — or she, as the case may one day be — was to have the authority to get things done, to make decisions, to act firmly to be in, about, a governor. But over the nearly five decades since, this power has been eroded by more and more legislation by more and more legislators who didn't want to let the governor govern.

HERE AT HOME, Anchorage doesn't have just one mayor. It has an

elected mayor and 11 Assembly members, some of whom think they also are mayors. Let the mayor run the town? Not on your life. He — and the city — need an endless flow of new ordinances to get the job done. Or so some seem to think.

WELL, NOT SO were LGI to have its way. And its position is strong. For proof, look only at the most recent legislative session. Sure, there were some big ticket items on the agenda of the House and Senate. Things like changes to the way the Permanent Fund dollars are allocated and dividends paid. Things like a gambling casino. Things like requiring wreaths and vestments to have work permit cards. Things like a lot of other things. But had none of them been introduced, or none of them passed, would the state have ceased to function? The bet here is that — gambling casino or not — Alaska would have rolled right along, and nobody would have been the wiser. Or probably even have cared.

ONE OF THE problems with these years and years of excessive legislative growth, at both the state and local level, is that ordinary folks — just trying to deal with the daily grind of life — are turned off by all the constant yammering, the never-ending TV sound bites from Juneau and City Hall, the drone of ceaseless arguments, and the overwhelming headlines that daily scream of doom and gloom. Why do only 30 percent of the eligible voters go to the polls? Maybe because people are sick and tired of all the background static and noise generated when the Legislature meets month after month and when the Assembly gathers for hours and hours each week in work sessions and formal meetings.

LESSER GOVERNMENT Inc. would spare much of that. A Legislature that meets only every other year — barring, like now, the need for a third extraordinary session along the way — would not cripple Alaska. An Assembly meeting no more than once a month — and allowing the mayor to do the job of running the city — surely wouldn't be fatal. The membership role in LGI are now open.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
 Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
 Senior Editor

Saturday, June 5, 2004 **B-5**

ALL ABOARD, AND PLEASE...

Show your I.D.

YOU THOUGHT the tough security screening requirements were for airline passengers only. Well, not any more. Extended those now to tourists and locals riding the Alaska Railroad.

The Transportation Security Administration has told railroad officials that passengers now are required to show a photo identification card issued by a government authority—or two other forms of I.D., presumably without a photo attached, and one of which must have been issued by a government authority.

We're assuming that means something like a driver's license, or a state passport, or maybe a military discharge card of some kind. No matter.

The effects of terrorism now have been extended to the railroad that winds its way northward from Seward to Fairbanks. No surprise, really, considering the state of the world today. Nationally, security concerns about the safety of railroad operations have heightened since the deadly March terrorist railroad bombings in Madrid.

Railroad officials say a TSA pilot program for railroad security screening processes is being tested in Maryland. Meanwhile, however, the photo I.D. checks of all Alaska Railroad passengers above the age of 18 became a fact of life this past Sunday.

Welcome aboard

Ted and Lisa

IF YOU LIKE what Ted Stevens has done for Alaska—and for the country—you also should like Lisa Murkowski in the upcoming U.S. Senate election.

Democrat Tony Knowles, who was a left-leaning liberal when he was mayor and still a left-leaning liberal when he was governor, is trying to oust Murkowski from the Senate.

His target, unfortunately, is one who has become a real partner and teammate for Sen. Stevens as they battle for Alaska's interests in Congress. Says Stevens, making no bones about whom he supports in this coming election:

"I think it is a wonderful thing Lisa is there with us in Washington. We have more serious issues now in the Senate than I remember us ever having in the last 35 years. I am really pleased to have her here. She digs into this stuff, with all the problems we have on our plate, she is a tremendous senator and I don't know what I would do without her."

Alas, poor Tony. Absent that kind of support from Alaska's most senior and most experienced political leader, he has had to slip and slide around the fact that the soon-to-be Democratic presidential nominee, John Kerry, and his fellow Massachusetts senator, Ted Kennedy, are dead set against Alaska resource development.

For Alaska eyes only

The June 1 editorial "Tony asks New York Times readers for Outside Money" failed the technology test, miserably. To sign on to NYTimes.com, one has to be registered at that Web site. To register, one has to give them a ZIP code. The Tony Knowles ads were displayed only on the screens of people with Alaska ZIP codes. I suspected as much, and confirmed this with a friend in Olympia, Wash., who went to the exact same store and had a completely different banner ad. I then re-registered using a new name and an Outside ZIP code. Guess what? No banner ads for Tony Knowles Web browsers. Did you get this wrong? Amazing what they can do with computers these days, eh?

Edie Middleburgh
 Eagle River

Their lives for your rights

Day after day I read letters to the editor that say we shouldn't be in Iraq. They claim the Bush administration deceived us and they call for an immediate withdrawal of our troops.

As a combat Vietnam veteran, I support their right to send in those letters. I went off to war to protect those rights just as my Dad did in World War II and my great, great, great-granddad did in the Revolutionary War. Over that period of time, 1 million Americans have given their lives so we can be a free country.

We all know freedom is not free. Well, the exercise of those rights won with the American blood is not free either. As a young Army officer leading other young men into battle, it had a very negative impact on our morale to see people back home protesting our mission. We were putting our lives on the line every day to complete a mission our country had asked us to accomplish. When we saw people back home devalue that goal, it took a serious toll on us. I'm quite sure it took the same impact on our troops today. To say you support the troops but not the mission is disingenuous. On war you are with us or you are not.

Don't bad yourself, this is a war. We are fighting these terrorists in

Letters to The Times



Afghanistan and Iraq instead of fighting them in Seattle and New York. We have an excellent military made up of dedicated men and women to fight this war. They are doing it to protect you and your rights. So go ahead and write those anti-war letters. We veterans and the young people in the military today have made damn sure you can do that.

Bob Bell
 Anchorage

Appreciates remembrance

Congratulations on your coverage of the WWII Memorial dedication and today's (May 31) editorials. Thank you for remembering our troops, dead and alive. Keep up the good work.

Robert O. Baker, Ph.D.
 (Cdr. USN (ret.))
 Anchorage

Knowles lacks insight

Democrat Tony Knowles regurgitates the very worst from the Democrat party and war fever swamps. He regurgitates fraudulent Democrat claims that Iraq posed no imminent danger; and that we've found no weapons of mass destruction.

Congress voted on two resolutions of war against terror of which Iraq was a part. His party was fully ready to go to war with Iraq in 1999 under Bill Clinton.

The Anchorage Times

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with precisely the same intelligence. Perhaps Democrats only suspect war when Democrats are in the White House.

Knowles ignores President Bush's specific language that after Sept. 11 we must no longer wait until a threat is an imminent danger to do something about it. Iraq was clearly a very dangerous place, training terrorists, giving aid and support to al Qaeda, including a training camp in northern Iraq and a terrorist training facility in Salween Park near Baghdad. It had a jetliner fuselage where hijacking skills were taught.

Finally, he durns about missing Iraq WMDs. He ignores that a bunch of them showed up in Jordan, in the back of trucks full of VX, other nerve agents and explosives in a pile to fill 20,000-30,000 Jordanians. The trucks were manned by al Qaeda and came from Iraq. Large convoys of trucks from Iraq went into Syria during the days leading up to the war. Perhaps we found where they went.

Knowles does not say we must win World War III at all costs. He does not condemn our Islamist enemies. He is far more interested in an exit strategy than in a win. Knowles demonstrates yet again that he does not have the knowledge or the insight to be elected senator.

Alex Gannac
 Anchorage

U.S. must retaliate

What part of "The United States is at War" is so hard for some people to understand? The U.S. has been attacked several times in the past five to 10 years with little retaliation. On Sept. 11, 2001, this changed. Now we are in a war against terrorism. As with other wars, people are killed, maimed and lost.

Why have some people in the U.S. lost the will to fight for what is right? Pearl Harbor galvanized the entire country and we, as a country, made many sacrifices for the war, which lasted for years. The enemy has changed but the need for our nation to fight has not. The war against terrorism is being fought on foreign ground now. Let us end it there, not on domestic soil.

Ron Welches
 Anchorage

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Friday, June 4, 2004 B-7

ALASKA, NOT MANHATTAN, WAS ...

Tony's target

WE HAVE BEEN properly taken to task by a couple of readers about our rude comments last Tuesday about the Tony Knowles campaign ad that appeared on The New York Times Web site.

One of those was Eddie McLaughlin of Eagle River, who gently said we "failed the technology test, miserably."

Our failure, he pointed out, was not knowing that the ad appeared only on the computer screens of those Web site Times readers with an Alaska e-mail address. A Knowles campaign official, in much more unkind words, also told us the same thing.

We confess, therefore, to reaching an erroneous conclusion. We didn't know that cyberspace technology was so sophisticated that The Times — and presumably other big newspapers around the country — can deftly meet such specific demographic needs of those who buy advertising.

So we were wrong to say that Tony, in this case, was seeking \$2,000 — and even \$4,000 — contributions to his campaign from Eastern readers who buy into the New York Times' vision of how Alaska should be managed. In this ad, assuming there were no others that went flying off into space-age destinations, he indeed was asking a special group of Alaskans to contribute big bucks — and even some smaller ones — to help finance his effort to toss Republican Lisa Murkowski out of the U.S. Senate.

STILL, THE CHOICE of The Times for this sort of campaign solicitation is interesting.

Readers of that Web site, even in Alaska, are a group somewhat elevated above the mainstream of newspaper readers. After all, The New York Times is hardly your local morning paper. It has a select readership in Alaska — for a couple of reasons. It is — despite its contained bias against Alaska interests — a very good newspaper. And its coverage of the nation and the world is vast.

But our previous criticism of The Times still stands. Editorially, it opposes oil exploration and development on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It likewise has an ultra-environmental attitude on all things Alaskan, and its news columns — as well as its editorials — continually reflect an anti-growth position on natural resources development here, be it fisheries, or oil, or highways, or anything else that is needed to our economy or improve the infrastructure required to build the state.

From our viewpoint, a candidate who spends some of his campaign dollars to buy advertising in a publication that doesn't stand with Alaska leaves himself open to justifiable wonder.

Like Sen. John Kerry and Ted Kennedy, The Times is not for ANWR, pure and simple. It's a fact of political life that Tony can't dodge.

And even were he to be elected, his chance of getting them to change their minds is not Zip Nada.

Outside dollars pad Knowles' coffers

By PAUL JENKINS

It is always instructive during the political rally season to listen carefully to what politicians and their minions say about money, which is, after all, the lifeblood of any political campaign.

This year in Alaska, the season may turn out to be sulkier than most. The U.S. Senate seat vacated by Frank Murkowski is up for grabs and could be pivotal in helping determine the Senate majority and the balance of power in that chamber. The major political parties are expected to go all out to win the seat, and why not? The race is cheap by national standards, there are fewer voters to influence and a Senate seat from Alaska ultimately is as powerful as one from California.

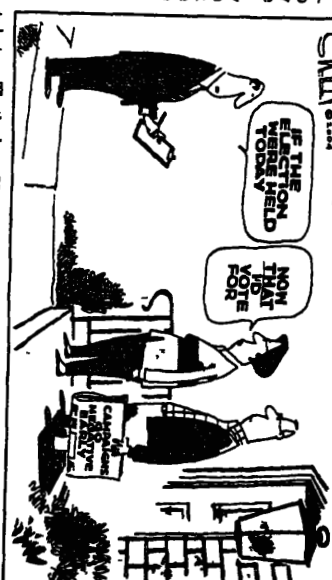
With this race so important, voters should pay close attention. The Tony Knowles campaign offers a useful example of what to watch for.

In a recent letter of protest to the Times, a Knowles campaign staffer said, "Indiv-

idual contributors make up the bulk of Knowles' funding, over 84 percent. Of those individuals, 72 percent are from Alaska. That's 3,130 Alaskans."

When political folks start rattling off percentages, I get suspicious. What the guy claimed sounds impressive, I suppose, but it left me wondering, "Is it 72 percent of 84 percent something like just 60 percent?" And why is he blathering on about contributors instead of contributions, the real test of political muscle? Is the campaign proud that only 60 percent of its contributors are in Alaska? In my experience, when campaigns start touting one thing, they are trying to draw attention away from something else. What, I wondered, is the real story?

Federal Election Commission records show the Knowles campaign, as of March 31, had amassed \$1,761,536 in contributions, from individuals, PACs and committees. Of that, \$1,470,412 came from individual contributors on influencing Alaska's Senate



tributors. That's about 83 percent of the total.

At first glance, it seems impossible that Alaska contributors to the campaign could number 3,130. FEC records show only 1,480 contributions, with some more than one from a single contributor, but the commission only requires documentation of donations in excess of \$200. The Knowles campaign says it has about 6,000 contributors, including more than 3,500 of them gave in amounts of less than \$200.

Does that make the campaign's fundraising a grass-roots effort? Hardly. The small donations provide numbers a candidate can brag about, not the fiscal power a campaign needs. That, the FEC records show, is coming from Outside.

Of the \$1.4 million from individuals in small and large contributions, FEC records show \$705,558 came from 630 out-of-state donations. That amounts to about 48 percent of the campaign's individual contributions. Those 630 contributions came from 636 people. Outside that means something like 12 percent of the campaign's 5,000 contributors has, so far, given nearly half the individual contributions.

When you add that amount to the \$267,123 Knowles has received from PACs, the total haul from out-of-state donors to about 55 percent.

Who are the Outside contributors intent on influencing Alaska's Senate

race? Many of them are trial lawyers in the nation's largest cities, who, perhaps enamored of Democratic deficits for tort reform, have so far sent up more than \$200,000 for Knowles' campaign. Another \$71,000 came from lawyers in Alaska. Contributions also came from folks such as Paul Brauer, a retired Seattle computer software whiz who has spent hundreds of money supporting Alaska's environmental industry and trying to push Alaska's politics sharply to the left. Others include Susan Thomas, a New York lawyer and close personal friend of Hillary Clinton, and capital managers and developers and bankers and investment groups. To be fair, there were a bare handful of small contributions, but mostly the checks were in the \$1,000 to \$2,000 range.

When all is said and done, what we have in the Knowles campaign is an operation that pretends to be at the service of Outside money and interests trying to influence the U.S. Senate race here. Nothing could be further from the truth. More than half of its money comes from Outside interests. In fact, a mere 12 percent of its contributors, all from Outside, mind you, gave nearly half the campaign's individual contributions.

That is likely what the campaign wishes you did not know.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Thursday, June 3, 2004 B-7

PUBLIC RETIREMENT SYSTEM HEADED FOR ...

Bigger trouble

IT IS WELL beyond time for Alaska to establish another tier in its employment scheme, one with a different approach to health and retirement benefits.

The Public Employees Retirement System is underfunded by about \$2.9 billion, and if all of the system's obligations came due today, it would be able to pay only about 73 percent of them. Officials say there is no reason for alarm, that retirement plans across the country are facing the same problem. Over the years, they say, it will be fully funded. PERS, as the system is known, serves municipal and state workers alike. Only a few years ago it was more than fully funded. No more. A combination of factors convinced actuaries that more funds are needed to ensure it can fully meet its obligations in the years ahead. Skyrocketing health costs, people living longer, and a shaky stock market — all forming a financial "Perfect Storm," if you will — worked against the system.

Employee contributions are set. To get more money will require better returns on investments — and increased employer contributions, which are figured as a part of their total wage costs.

For fiscal 2005, employers faced a 5 percent increase in contributions, to 11.77 percent. In fiscal 2006, that will increase to 16.77 percent. The actuaries who annually evaluate the fund had suggested 24.91 percent for 2005 and 25.63 percent the next year to get the system on track.

WHAT ALL of this means on the local level is that property taxpayers eventually will get stuck with the tab or face reduced services if contributions continue to increase, jack-up costs.

One of the problems is that the state system is a "defined benefit" program where the employer takes all the risks and employees are guaranteed an outcome. More common in the private sector are "defined contributions" systems where employees assume the risks and are promised nothing. A good example is a 401(k) program that rises and falls with its investments.

The state now has three tiers of employment, the last two adopted as cost-saving measures. Because state employees' benefits are protected by the state constitution, new tiers for new workers were required to trim future benefits and save money. A fourth tier is needed now.

The state Public Employees and Teachers' Retirement systems, together about \$5 billion in the hole, have formed a committee to explore such a change to control costs.

We hope that it will consider changing to a "defined contribution" program with more health care costs being assumed by workers. Without such a change there is every likelihood that each year cities and the state will simply have to pour more money into the system.

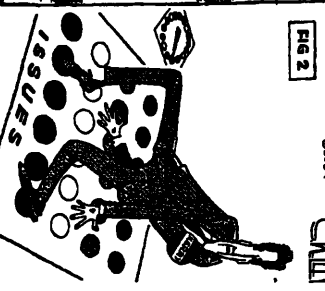
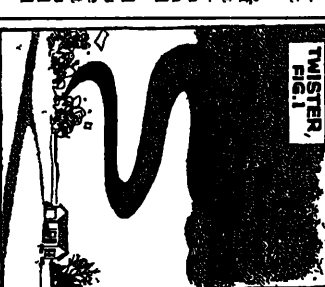
If that were to continue, we all eventually will feel the bite.

A child's view of the D-Day fighting

By TOM BRENNAN

I was only 7 years old when the invasion force went ashore at Normandy, but I know a lot about it. All the kids did.

In 1944 there was no television, newspapers were the primary source of news. Their articles, which kids didn't read, were supplemented by radio announcements and broadcasts from bomb targets like London by men with booming voices, most notably Edward R. Murrow.



Plum birds of the fighting — and all other news of the day — were shown as newscasts in the movie theaters. Since most children went to the movies about once a week, we saw all the news footage and were pretty well informed about world events — for our age. And what we saw scared us to death.

The fighting in France on and after D-Day was frightening enough, but as the troops swept fur-

ther into Europe they began to overrun concentration camps and the ovens used to kill Jews and other prisoners by the thousands.

We also saw unbelievable scenes of starving men and women weeping from behind barbed wire fences as Allied soldiers broke down the camp gates. Like anything else that in our young lives

As the troops moved through Europe, they ran across drives of enemy soldiers who were ready to get out of the war and gladly surrendered themselves and their weapons. Since the fast-moving invasion force was hard-pressed to handle the swelling number of German prisoners, many were placed aboard transport ships returning to the United States.

I lived near Fort Devens in Massachusetts and civilians were able to use some of the on-base facilities, including an indoor roller-skating rink. One scary experience remembered from that time was being helped on with our skates by German prisoners, the faces fighters we had seen in the newscasts.

Many European cities were dark because lights were either turned out or windows were shrouded by blackout curtains — or the power generators had been destroyed. The cities were being bombed from the air and allowing light to escape was an invitation to have a blockbuster dropped down your chimney.

The song's full stanzas went: *When the lights go on again, all over the world And the boys are home again, all over the world And run or snow is all that may fall from the skies above*

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Wednesday, June 2, 2004 **B-7**

TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM ...

In the red

MANY ALASKANS are beginning to feel they are being whipsawed by teachers' union and school districts' demands for funding increases after funding increases. Will there ever be enough? It likely will get worse.

The Legislature this year asked up \$775 million in state foundation formula funding — money parceled out to school districts based on the size of enrollments. Lawmakers acted as district after district across the state promised layoffs, and worse, because of budget gaps.

But despite the largest single-year jump in the formula since statehood, education leaders and union officials say more will be needed next year. Why?

There are myriad reasons why school districts face annual increased costs. Unfunded federal mandates. Increased enrollment. Inflation. But the primary drains on school budgets are increased operating costs in the form of wages and benefits — and, of late, state-mandated contribution increases in the teachers' retirement program. It was largely these contribution increases that tilted many school districts deeper into the red.

What triggered those increases? The Teachers' Retirement System is in the red to the tune of about \$2.1 billion. If today it had to pay all its obligations, it would be able to cover only about 64 percent of them, but state officials say there is no reason to panic.

ALASKA IS not alone. Other plans and employers across the nation find themselves in the same fix. The problem is that many of these retirement programs are "defined benefit" plans with a guaranteed outcome. The employer assumes the risk. Much of private industry offers "defined contribution" plans, with no such guarantees, and the employee assumes the risk.

In the '90s, retirement contributions required from school districts and the state actually declined because of a variety of factors, including a robust stock market that buoyed the fund. Reduced contributions by school districts and local governments in 2002 and 2003 amounted to an \$11 million unexpected windfall for them. But a combination of increased health care costs, retirees living longer and taking a beating in the stock market — described by actuaries as the "perfect storm" — all contributed to losses and the recent increases necessary to make them up.

To begin filling the gap, school districts faced a retirement contribution increase in fiscal 2004 of 16 percent of their total payroll costs, up from 12 percent. In fiscal 2006, they are looking at a 21 percent contribution rate.

What does all this mean? Many districts likely will find themselves financially strapped next year as well, and the Legislature will hear more pleas for funding. The public may again face the real consequences of an underfunded teachers' retirement fund, perhaps including layoffs and program reductions.

No interest in joining suckers club

By ELISE PATKOTAK

Two past May I received a check in the mail from an advertising company for an Internet telephone book. The check was for about \$3. Being the computer businesswoman that I am, I looked at the check and wondered why I didn't remember ever signing up for the service.

I read the front carefully to make sure it was an actual check and not one of those fake checks that you send back to the company and they give you that much credit if you buy the service. But no, it was a legitimate check.

I endorsed it, cashed it and figured I'd been reimbursed for some overpayment I'd made to them. Since I was in the process of canceling some telephone advertising my business had used in the past, I figured this must have been part of that, and this refund represented the termination of the relationship. Not that I spent that much time thinking about it. It was only for \$3. It wasn't exactly going to put my business in the black for the year.

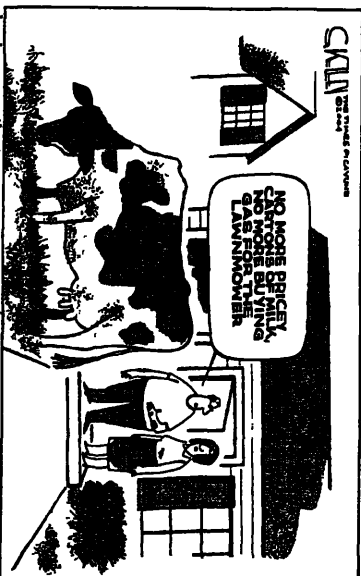
So imagine my surprise when I got a bill in the mail this week for \$179 for an Internet listing of my company that I did not remember signing up for.

Patkotak

Remembering Now, I might not be able to track every \$3 refund check that shows up in the mail, but I sure as heck would have remembered signing up for \$179 worth of Internet advertising since that is pretty much my entire advertising budget for the year.

So I called the company to see if I had accidentally negotiated this while still on those pain pills after my surgery, in which case I would consider the contract null and void for the obvious reason that you can't take the word of someone drugging and grogging because of pain pills.

But no, I hadn't forgotten any negotiation. I hadn't even spoken to this company before. What I had done was cash their \$3 check. Apparently I had authorized the wrong side of the check. What I should have done was take off my glasses, grab a magnifying glass and



closey peruse the teeny tiny type on the back of the check when I signed up to it. Somewhere in that forest of black dots, I apparently agreed that by cashing the check, I would spend \$179 advertising my company with them.

As I attempted to shake off the feeling of being stung, I explained to the woman on the other end of the phone that I wouldn't be paying that bill or any future bill they might send me. She got quite huffy and stated that if I didn't want the service, I didn't have to take it. Somehow, she made it sound as if I were the sneaky one for taking their \$3 and then refusing to give them \$179 back.

While my math may not be the best, getting \$179 back on a \$3 investment in less than a month — well, that's the kind of rate of return we haven't seen since the '90s Internet start-ups.

As P. T. Barnum raved David Hannum once said, "There's a sucker born every minute." I can only assume these people are doing business based on the theory that enough suckers will buy into their scheme — or feel obligated to pay after cashing the check even if they didn't realize what they were committing to when they cashed it — that they will more than make up for those of us born the other 99 minutes of each hour.

If there is one thing the Internet has taught me though, it's that there are people in this world who will believe just

about anything, no matter how absurd it sounds. Since many of them are my friends, I don't want to actually suggest they are suckers. But I have to figure that the same people who send me messages about women exploding in gas stations because static from their panty hose mixes with gas fumes from the pump are the same people who would buy into this little \$3 check scheme.

These are the same people who think there is a little girl in a hospital somewhere in the deep South who has been dying for more than five years now and still doesn't have enough get well cards to make it in the Guinness Book of World Records.

To all of them, I have only this to say: There is no little girl. There has not been one woman who has ever actually exploded in a gas station from static cling. You will not have bad luck if you don't pass the story on to 50 of your closest friends within seven minutes after receiving it.

Now stand up and proudly say with me, "There may be a sucker born every minute, but I don't have to be one of them."

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of Parallel Logic, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd., a writing/graphics company.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

TONY ASKS NEW YORK TIMES READERS FOR ...

Outside money

I ET'S HEAR NO more pious posturing from Democratic senatorial candidate Tony Knowles about his home-grown, grass-roots campaign fund-raising.

And let's hear no more attacks from his campaign people accusing Republican incumbent Lisa Murkowski of soliciting funds from Outside sources who happen to agree with her work in the Senate.

Knowles, without any notice to his liberal Alaska backers, has taken campaign fund-raising to a new cyberspace level. He has placed major solicitation advertising on the web page of The New York Times.

The Times — it's worth pointing out once again — is a newspaper adamantly opposed to oil and gas exploration on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. And it editorially also espouses continual environmental efforts to put Alaska in a green wilderness.

But it has a huge circulation, and principles aside, Knowles clearly hopes to tap the pocketbooks of Times' readers who share the newspaper's anti-development policies in Alaska.

Knowles' ad in the Web edition of the Times pulls no subtle punches. It begins with this simple statement:

"Contribute Now!"

And it proceeds thus way:

"Thanks for clicking on our ad in the New York Times! Tony's program is Alaska First. But first we have to help him win."

"Please help pay for the ad you've just seen and for the TV spots now on the air in Alaska. Every dollar counts. We appreciate anything you can give."

"Thank you for making this pledge and showing your support for Tony Knowles."

An individual may give up to \$2,000 for the primary election and an additional \$2,000 for the general election. Contributions to Tony Knowles for US Senate are not tax deductible."

THERE IS MUCH more verbiage in this slick call for funds from readers of The New York Times to participate in the outcome of the Alaska senatorial election. But the message is clear.

You read The New York Times? You read its editorial positions on Alaska? You want to help elect a senator from Alaska? Give money to Tony Knowles. Send \$2,000. Or better yet, make that \$4,000 in two separate bunches.

Tony's your man.

But, on the other hand, if you don't happen to agree with the Times' brand of managing Alaska's affairs from downtown Manhattan, maybe you'll want to contribute a few dollars to the campaign of Lisa Murkowski.

She's already in Washington, fighting for Alaska.

World War II veterans deserve better

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Those of us who publicly opposed placing the National World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington argued that, doing so was a prescription for failure. If the memorial were to respect the eight lines, symmetries and elegance of the Mall, it would be too small to do justice to the grandeur of the Second World War. And if the memorial were large enough to reflect the majesty of the subject, it would overpower and ruin the delicate harmonies of the Mall.



The World War II memorial has just opened, and it is indeed a failure. The good news is that the Mall survives. The bad news is that for all its attempted monumentality, the memorial is deeply inadequate — a busy vacuity, hollow to the core.

The memorial is a parenthesis, quite literally so — two semicircular assemblies of pillars curving the Rainbow Pool on the invisible axis that connects the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument. The pool, with its fountains, makes a nice space for tourists and toddlers to dip their feet on a hot summer's day. But as a remembrance of the most momentous event of the 20th century, it is a disaster.

Where does one start? The memorial's major feature — 56 granite pillars 17 feet high, adorned with wreaths and marked with the names of the states and US territories — is a conception of staggering banality. One descends the main entry to the monument and the pillar to the left is marked American Samoa, on the right, the Virgin Islands.

Why a hundred? Did they die in units of a hundred? Did they fight as centuries? The number is entirely arbitrary, a way to get the stars to fit the wall. Four thousand stars is both too few and too many. Too few to represent the sheer mass, the unbearable weight of 400,000 dead. And too many — and too abstract — to represent the suffering of the mother of a single fallen hero.

What do the states have to do with World War II? What great chapter of that struggle was written by the Virgin Islands or Kentucky, for that matter?

This wall has the feel of a bureaucratic compromise between commemorating every individual (as does the Vietnam Memorial) and representing less as a whole (as do tombs of the unknown soldiers). The solution — take 400,000 and divide it by 100 — is nothing but sheer imagination because I felt sorry for the old veterans who came with war medals and grandchildren to make their pilgrimage to the monument's opening on Memorial Day weekend. They deserved to be celebrated. They deserved their memorial. And they will no doubt celebrate this one because it is all that they have. They will lead it with the dignity and power of their own experience. But once again, it is they who will have done the work. They should not have to. They deserve better, far better.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

REMEMBER OUR FALLEN HEROES ON THIS ...

Memorial Day

WITH SO MANY of America's finest in harm's way in Iraq, Afghanistan and other outposts around the troubled globe, let us take a few moments on this Memorial Day to remember all those who throughout the history of this nation paid duty's ultimate price.

This solemn day of remembrance, now trivialized by too many as little more than an excuse for a long weekend, first was known as Decoration Day. It traces its roots to the final months of the War Between the States, when women's anxieties in the South and the North worked to preserve and decorate with flowers the graves of the fallen.

A druggist in Waterloo, N.Y., Henry C. Welles, is credited with fostering in 1865 the idea of an organized effort to honor fallen veterans by decorating their graves with wreaths, crosses and bouquets. That city has celebrated what has become Memorial Day since May 5, 1866. Despite claims from more than two dozen communities that they originated the day, President Lyndon Johnson in 1966 officially declared the birthplace, indeed, was Waterloo, winning that town a spot in history.

Gen John Logan, the first commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued General Order 11 on May 30, 1868, that officially set up a day of remembrance, Decoration Day for Union soldiers. On the first celebration, 5,000 people gathered to decorate graves of more than 20,000 Union soldiers buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Logan ordered Confederate graves be ignored.

THE SOUTH refused to participate in what would become Memorial Day, honoring its dead on another day. But across the nation, as the 1870s came to an end and a new century began, more and more communities celebrated the day. It was not until the close of World War I that the South participated and ceremonies began to honor the dead of all of America's wars. But Memorial Day did not become a national holiday until 1971, when Congress said it was to be celebrated on the last Monday in May.

At national cemeteries across the nation today, flags decorate the last resting places of those who have paid the ultimate price in our names. More than 280,000 American flags have been placed on gravesites at Arlington National Cemetery alone, protected by the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, "The Old Guard."

We should take a few moments on this holiday to remember the men and women who have fallen during the wars that have shaped this nation, and remember our debt to them, and to their families and loved ones who have paid in their own painful way.

Then, host a flag in your yard, and say a prayer for our sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, fathers and mothers risk-ing everything, every day in far off lands. You can join with them in saying God bless America.

Educational triage should be considered

BY WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Imagine you're a head physician faced with a large-scale disaster such as the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center, the Oklahoma City bombing or battlefield casualties. The first thing that must be acknowledged is that you have limited resources. That means treatment priorities must be set. This is the foundation for triage, a word from the French verb "trier," which means "to sort."

Some disaster victims are critically injured and require immediate treatment if they are to survive. Other victims are already dead, and others, though alive, are so severely injured that no degree of medical help will enable them to survive. Then, there are others who are injured and require medical attention, but they will not die if care is delayed.

It's a waste of resources to give medical attention to a victim who's going to die no matter what is done or to give medical attention to a victim who, though injured and requiring medical attention, won't die if care is delayed when to do so takes medical attention from a victim who will survive only if he's given immediate treatment.

For efficient, not to mention humane, resource allocation, medical resources should first be spent on victims who will die if unattended but will survive if attended. Next, treat victims who will get better (or at least survive) until more resources are available, and last, treat and give comfort to those who will die, even if attended.

Any doctor would say, "In the interest of fairness, I'm going to treat all victims equally or on a first-come, first-served basis on those who're nearest death." shouldn't be seen as compassionate and caring.

The triage principle is applicable to any disaster. When the average black high school graduate has an academic



achievement level on par with that of a white seventh- or eighth-grader, and the achievement levels of white seventh- and eighth-graders are nothing to write home about, I think we can reasonably say black education is a disaster. As such, we might benefit from what could be called educational triage.

There's no question that black youngsters from female-headed and/or low- and moderate-income households can excel academically. Partial evidence is the achievement levels of black youngsters who attend private schools such as Leola Preparatory (Cincinnati) and Ivy Leola (Philadelphia) and public schools such as Frederick Douglass (New York). At these schools, nearly all students are at grade level and often several years above.

Educational triage would acknowledge that there are black youngsters who cannot benefit academically no matter how many educational resources are spent on them. They have little or no family support. Their very presence in school through disruptive and criminal behavior makes education impossible for others. Spending resources on these youngsters is the educational equivalent of medical practitioners spending resources on disaster victims who'll die above.

By the way, there's another triage category that doctors won't own up to, and that's disaster victims who will survive only if they don't receive medical treatment. The educational equivalent of this category, where education victims are made worse off, is found in programs such as bilingual education and fuzzy math.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Painter

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

DESPITE THE EASTERN CRITICS, THE...

Work goes on

THE NEW YORK TIMES, the Washington Post, and various congressional critics to the contrary, the administration of Gov. Frank Murkowski is properly moving forward on the planning work necessary to one day build a bridge across Knik Arm.

Three Alaska firms have been awarded contracts to do the preliminary planning work required to move forward on eventual construction of the bridge. The three will coordinate their efforts to pull together on such things as conceptual engineering, evaluation of cost estimates, site location studies and construction strategies.

Construction of a bridge spanning Knik Arm, connecting Anchorage with the southern banks of the Mat-Su area, has been a dream of Alaskans for generations. Considering some of the great bridges elsewhere in America, this project would be minuscule in comparison, and not all that technically challenging.

Yet the naysayers have been around for years, doing everything possible to block progress. Most recently, the big Eastern press powerhouses have been taking their licks at the Knik Arm crossing — calling it a boondoggle, a bridge to nowhere, congressional pork and a few other unkind words. So be it.

The fact is that the project would be a major step forward in building infrastructure that Southcentral Alaska needs to serve future needs. Congressman Don Young, chairman of the House Transportation Committee, is carrying the ball for this in Washington. Gov. Murkowski is doing his part in Juneau.

Stay the course, we say.
The time finally has arrived for a bridge over Knik Arm.

\$2-plus a gallon

THE NEXT TIME John Kerry fills the tank of his wife's SUV, we hope he notes how much the price of gasoline has soared in the last couple of weeks.

It's above the \$2-a-gallon mark in Anchorage, and the price is higher than that in San Francisco and other cities. There, the tab for a gallon of gas is nearing — or nudging above — \$3 a gallon.

The Democratic presidential contender needs reminding that one way to help control the rising cost of imported oil would be to open ANWR for exploration and development. Kerry, however, is beholden to environmental lobbyists and has taken a firm stand against oil drilling on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Tough luck, motorists of America. Kerry is not on your side.

'Tis a joyful and blessed thing to do

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

ALL THINGS considered, no one among us has the power to change the whole world for the better. But there is a simple way to make today — and any other day for that matter — brighter. It only for a brief instant. All it takes is a smile and we all have much to smile about on this Memorial Day weekend, as we remember with somber but happy gratitude the sacrifices of those who fought to keep us free.

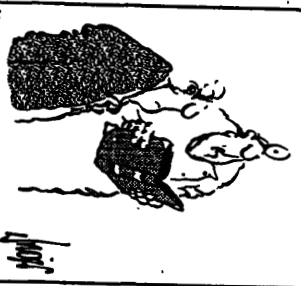
WITH THIS IN MIND, here's one small vote for declaring a smile the most powerful expression available to the human race. When you see someone smile, you can't help but feel better inside. A smile on another person's face cheers you up, even if seen for a passing moment while walking down the street, surrounded by strangers. And among friends, smiles all around are a way to guarantee a good time by all.



TOBIN

A BABY LOVES to see its mother smile — and instinctively smiles in return. A bride at her wedding smiles with joy, and all those around her are caught up in the happy excitement. A youngster rips out a game-winning hit in a Little League game, and his face erupts in glee. And in the crowd, there's a smile a yard wide on the face of his father. All of life's successes, be they small or large, come wrapped in smiles.

SMILES ARE very much a part of our musical heritage. From Tin Pan Alley have come countless popular songs reflecting the importance of a smile, including one written 76 years ago by Irving Kahal, Francis Wheeler and Sammy Fain. We still sing their song today. "Just Let a Smile be Your Umbrella." On any rainy, rainy day, they promised, "a smile will bring the sunshine and you'll never get wet." Nearly four decades after it was first introduced, the song was still so popular that it was featured in the 1948 movie, "Give My Regards to Broadway."



"There we go! Step one. Take off your shirt."

gentle to Broadway. And a 1959 Perry Como recording of the song went to the top of the popular music charts.

IN ALL OF THE world's great art, there is perhaps no painting more famous than the portrait of Mona Lisa, an oil-on-wood masterpiece by Leonardo da Vinci. According to art historians, the Mona Lisa was painted sometime between 1503 and 1505, and depicts the wife of Francesco del Giocondo, a well-known Florentine gentleman of the day. But it is neither the husband nor his wife that makes this portrait memorable — it is her smile. Five hundred years later, she could be anybody — and makes her famous — an enigmatic smile that has mesmerized generations after generations after generations.

YOU HAVE TO travel to Paris and visit the Louvre, where Leonardo's famous painting hangs, to see Mona Lisa smile up close and personal. But every day of the week, you can see smiles that are just as impressive right here at home — in the elevator at work, at the check-out line at Fred Meyer's, in the warm greetings you receive at the Restaurant or at the Southside Bistro. You can see people smiling as you walk along Fourth Avenue, and you can

share a quick bit of the happiness being felt by those you pass along the way.

AND SMILES ARE two-way streets. A smile on your face will brighten the lives of others you encounter. It never fails. Smile at a stranger, and the chances are a hundred to one you'll get a smile in return. It's human nature. It's almost impossible not to respond to a smile with a smile of your own.

IT'S NOT ALWAYS easy to smile. Sometimes it may be nearly impossible, given that grief and sadness and hurt also are emotions that are part of our lives. Often, only the smile among us are able to smile in ways that help ease the pain of sorrowful and tragic times. But help they do. Blessed are those who can comfort others by the warmth of their smiles.

WE DON'T NEED to make a campaign about all of this. No bumper stickers are required. There's no reason to buy a TV spot or an ad in the paper to try to promote a smile-a-day project at home or in our schools. Such things would defeat the purpose. Smiles shouldn't be programmed. They don't need a structured plan. To smile is to relax and burst off all the pressures of the moment.

DOES ALL OF this sound like advice from Pollyanna? Well, maybe so — which makes it seem kind of silly. But silly things come to think of it, often evoke a smile. And that's what really is about here.

THE BEST THING about a smile, more often than not, is that it's easy to come by. A smile makes other people happy. And it makes the one who smiles happy. A smile won't change the world at large. But it will make your world a much more joyous place.

AND JUST FOR fun, those of you in other areas might get a smile by logging on to <http://www.great.com-postcardsmileslipup.156314540.htm>. You'll find it a happy thing to do. And let's not forget one more thing happy thing to do — to proudly fly the Stars and Stripes on this Memorial Day.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
 Publisher

A TRIBUTE TO A NATION . . .

Of heroes

IN THE NATION'S capital today, on the Mall between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, a memorial to those who fought and to those who died in World War II will be formally dedicated.

Stretching the length of a football field, the granite and bronze monument spans two 43-foot arches at each end — one labeled Atlantic, the other Pacific, signifying the global nature of the battles fought by American forces during the war against the Axis of Germany, Japan and Italy. Fifty-six smaller pillars encircle a plaza and pool, one each for the states, the territories and the District of Columbia from which young Americans went to war in 1941.

World War II veterans who have visited the monument since its opening to the public last month have hailed its grandeur — a tribute a long time in the coming, and finally only approved when Alaska's Sen. Ted Stevens forced approval through a quibbling Congress.

As might be expected, architecture critics from some of the country's biggest newspapers, including *The New York Times*, have heaped scorn on the design of the monument. None of whom, we suspect, saw action in World War II — and probably never served in uniform, at all.

BUT COMMENTS from those who did, and whose personal views of the monument we have seen in print, have been universally overjoyed with the magnificent new addition to Washington's Mall.

For this Memorial Day weekend, the Smithsonian Institution and the National World War II Reunion committee are expecting record crowds. "We certainly think this could be the largest gathering of World War II veterans in one place since war ended in 1945," Jim Deutsch, curator for the reunion organizers, told the Associated Press.

A number of Alaska war veterans have traveled to Washington for today's ceremony and for the full weekend of festivities that are planned. More World War II vets we know here are planning later trips to Washington for visits sure to provide a moving experience for all.

Cold starts on the pillars represent the more than 400,000 Americans who died during the war, among the 16 million U.S. men and women who were in uniform during that period in world history. According to the AP, only 4 million World War II veterans are still alive — and with the passage of time, their ranks grow thinner at a rate of 1,066 a day.

The monument cost \$174 million, contributed by veterans and other Americans anxious to have the sacrifices of World War II memorialized. All told, more than \$195 million has been raised — with the money above that needed for construction now in a trust fund for future use.

We join in saluting those who fought and won a fierce war that brought freedom to oppressed lands and oppressed people.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
 Staff editor

Media cannot grasp War on Terror

By LEW M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Many American combat veterans returned home to a hero's welcome but I, am no hero. The heroes didn't come back.

Alaska's 72,000 veterans give the state the highest number of veterans per capita. Today, a delegation from the American Legion will represent Alaska veterans at the dedication of the long-overdue World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Prominent in the Alaska delegation will be U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens who was an Army transport pilot flying The Hump to supply troops in China.

Others in the delegation are Ed Knobel of Glenallen, who served on the carrier Hornet when it launched Jimmy Doolittle's raid on Tokyo, Jim Grizzell of Palmer who served on the carrier Lexington, and Peggy Huber of Fairbanks who served in the Army Nurses Corps in North Africa, Italy and the Philippines.



Williams

Hotels in the Washington area have been booked for months for the Memorial Day weekend. 800,000 have reservations for official breakfasts in various venues on the morning of the dedication. It's a big event, a last hurrah for the WWII vets. Most are in their late 70s or older. More than 1,000 a day are passing on, which is greater than WWII combat deaths, averaging 900 a day.

Sixteen million out of 145 million Americans were in the service during WWII, but not all at once. The most serving at any time was 8 million, or 18 percent of the population. To judge the impact of that war, imagine 18 percent of the population of any town suddenly leaving. And we worry about a plant closure, a base closure or a capital move?

While WWII vets debate their memorial, their thoughts will never be far from their grandsons and granddaughters defending our nation in the War on Terror.



Each will murmur a fervent prayer for their safety and mission success. The obsession of major media and some members of Congress over American troops rounding up prisoners — suspected terrorists — is overwhelming. It's political, it's disgusting and it's criminal. Criminal because it causes troops to hesitate in every action — how will it be reported or look on TV? Hesitation is deadly in combat.

National media lists Americans killed in Iraq at close to 800. That is far from the total in the War on Terror. There are more than 5 million entries in Google under the War on Terror. The war is more than 20 years old. It might have started when the Marine Barracks in Beirut were bombed in 1983, killing 241 Americans. Between 1967 and 1967 more than 100 U.S. embassies were attacked by bombs or rockets.

The attacks were as close as Mexico and as far as Africa, Indonesia, South America, Russia and China. It's another world war. Most went unreported by American media unless someone was killed, as occurred at Kohor Towers or Nairobi.

We lost 19 American sailors when the USS Cole was hit by suicide bombers in Yemen in 2001. The World Trade Center was first attacked in 1993, killing six Americans. Terrorists came back Sept. 11, 2001 to finish the job and to attack the Pentagon. A plane headed for the

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TODIN
Senior editor

HERE WE GO AGAIN . . .

Special session

THERE IS one thing to be said for a special session of the Legislature. It is focused. There is no time for sidesteps. Not too much opportunity for smoke and mirrors. Get it done and go home.

Of course, that's the way Alaska's regular annual legislative sessions should operate, too. Unfortunately, they don't — as witness the recently adjourned but of business that lasted four months and left a lot of things dangling.

To address some of those, Gov. Frank Murkowski plans to issue a call that will bring the 40 members of the House and 20 members of the Senate back to Juneau in late June.

The bad: A more disciplined group of lawmakers, willing to set aside partisan games and concentrating on doing what is best for Alaska, should have been able to better serve the state's needs in the course of 120 days — when they had nothing else to do, and the splendid isolation of Juneau in which to do it.

In the course of the coming session, the governor will be laying before the legislators some familiar items, prime among them a hope that a long-term fiscal plan can be adopted.

THAT MAY involve a new way for the state to manage the Permanent Fund to ensure annual dividend checks, on which Alaskans have become fully addicted, while providing the state with operating revenues. The most promising new method would be what is called a Percent of Market Value system — which most legislators clearly like, but which was strangled during the last session by political gamesmanship.

Murkowski's effort to get a \$1-a-pack increase in cigarette taxes also was snuffed out during the regular session. The governor indicates he will bring that back for the end-of-June gathering, along with some bond propositions — one of which would be designed to make motorists happy while idling in traffic at Tudor and Lake Ochs.

The opportunity to get something done in a special session, something that couldn't be accomplished in the regular session, comes because the legislators are limited in their ability to bounce all over the map. They can only consider measures proposed by the governor. Period.

There have been many special sessions over the years since the first state Legislature met in 1869. Many of them dealt with the need to respond to natural disasters — the Good Friday earthquake of 1964, the Fairbanks flood of 1967 — and other major state crises.

Whether the problems of this year rise to that standard is debatable.

But there is comfort in knowing that session won't last more than a few days — or maybe a week, at the most.

Undaunted in pursuit of fish dinners

By PAUL JENKINS

It's that time of year again, one fraught with humiliation, angst and even, at times, deep personal loathing. It's fishing season. Armed with the very best equipment, a truckload of catalogs can offer, I sally forth, fight through throngs of pesky landlanders and return, well, broken and flabbed.

It was not always thus. Once, I was a purveyor of pisciology, a fish killer to be reckoned with. At one point, the family boat fished me, or at least did not laugh outright. Yes, there was apprehension in those little fishy eyes, fear in those little fishy hearts.

Fishing then was a celebration, a rite, a way to spend hundreds of money. Fishing was a way to get meat, new stuff. Hey, it will save me in the woods, I'd say. A guy thing. Who can stay awake the longest? Who will catch the most fish? Who strikes the worst?

At first, I would career south through the night after work to slay fish in the very belly of the beast — the confluence of the Russian and Kenai rivers. Combat fishing at its finest. Casting under spider webs of snarled, tangled lines, sometimes six, seven, eight, nine, stretched tight 8 feet above the river, from bank to bank. I fished, therefore I was.

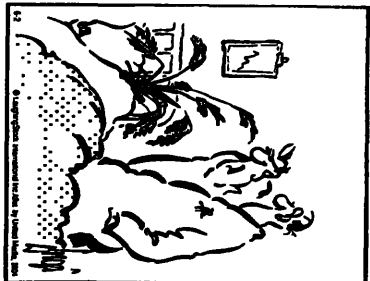


Jenkins

Without a thought, I would drive three hours, fish three hours, drive three hours home. Back to work, comatose. Then to the Anchor River. I would brave rain, butt-deep cold water, mosquitoes and snippy tourists at the whispered rumor of salmon or trout or Dollys or anything. "Hey, someone would say, 'they're in.' Off in a one-man stampede I was driven.

Then, almost imperceptibly, it started to happen. Virtually everywhere I fished, I lost my edge. Guys catching fish on my left. Guys catching fish on my right. Me? Maybe a fish, maybe not.

I wouldn't give up. It was just a slump. I'd say. Then I dragged my son to the Russian and as we buntily waded, milled the water, trying not to hook Germans, a guy sauntered up and asked him — the kid is 8 at the most.



"This is Dr. Eighn, our expert on tropical diseases."

And I started failing in with increasing regularity.

At one point, in a boat on the Kenai early in the year, I fished with a guy, his wife and their grown son on their dream vacation. Californians all, and in all senses of the word. The foods were not dressed to be on the river. But each of them caught two fish, with each keeping their largest — in less than hour. For the rest of that miserable, cold morning they sat and stared and whined through blue lips and shivered while I fished. I never got a bite. Nothing. The guide was glaring, scowled on the river with a laser I didn't feel sorry for any of them.

And that's the way it went no matter where I fished. Falling short of the limit. Not setting the hook. *Kerplop!* into very, very cold water. I could see fish, I could see people catching fish, but the likelihood was that I was not taking any home. It took a few years but it became crystal clear something seriously was amiss.

I wouldn't give up. It was just a slump. I'd say. Then I dragged my son to the Russian and as we buntily waded, milled the water, trying not to hook Germans, a guy sauntered up and asked him — the kid is 8 at the most.

mind you — if he had caught any fish. Without missing a beat, my boy matter-of-factly answers "No, we're junkies, we don't catch fish," and went back to thrashing the water.

Why? Why was this happening? I was using the same, even better, gear. The same water, thick with fish. The same energy — dude. The same tactics. Everything was the same. Was my hair messed up? Did the fish get find out about that, ya, thing that can't really be discussed, even now? It was time for some introspection, something that is not my strong suit. But this is fishing were talking about.

OK, there was the time when I was a kid that I ran over a bunch of cable on Daytona Beach and had the "Curse of the Cables." I couldn't go into the ocean, after that, ever, even now without being attacked by cranky crustaceans. But that couldn't be it. How would the fish up have even know about that?

Maybe it was all those mean things I said about liberals and Democrats, or animal rights wackos, or gun control fools or yo-yos that roost in the fast lane and talk on their cell phones. After fretting for an hour or two, it occurred to me that karma has little to do with it, that fishing is zealous. When you lose sight of the goal you simply do what zealous do, you redouble the effort. Or you can accept that they call it fishing, not catching, and get on with your life.

Oh, but I'll not give up. Never. Yes, there has been a dalliance with motor-cycles. Yes, driving three hours seems a pain, and yes, other interests have drawn my limited attention. But there are free, well, kinda free, fish dinners out there with my name on them. I know there is. I'm confident that has to be my year. I keep telling myself that.

But then there is this little, nagging voice in the back of my head that keeps saying, "Yeah, you'll catch something this year, probably a cold."

This is not a good start.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of *The Anchorage Times*.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Palmier

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

STATE INTERESTS NOT SERVED BY ...

ELF haste

DEMOCRATS ARE UP to their usual tricks, doing their best to obstruct any progress on a fiscal plan or a constitutional spending limit. Now they want to derail next month's special legislative session with debate over jacking up taxes on the oil industry.

These short-sighted political opportunists complain that high oil prices are a windfall for the industry and that the state should increase its share by adjusting the Economic Limit Factor, which provides incentives for industry capital spending in the hundreds of millions of dollars in Alaska. The industry hints that ELF increases may force it to spend its money elsewhere. Such a move would reverberate through Alaska's economy.

ELF is a complex subject, and if it needs discussion, it should come during the normal course of a legislative session, when there is time for debating all the facts. Jamming it into a special session where a fiscal plan, a tobacco tax and much-needed reform of the workers' compensation system are already on the table is a monumentally bad idea. But that is not news to Democrats.

It is almost enough to make you certain that they have little real interest in adjusting oil industry taxes, but rather that they see the issue as an opportunity to continue the obstructionism that became their hallmark in the last session.

IF YOU WILL, remember, Democrats in both chambers of the Legislature, desperate to deny Republicans any success, worked long and hard in lockstep earlier this year to sink a fiscal plan and a spending cap, to the detriment of the state.

House Democrats fought tooth and nail to head off any public vote on a spending limit or a constitutional change in how the earnings of the Permanent Fund are calculated, the so-called Percent of Market Value approach. But the House by the bare, necessary two-thirds vote, with every Democrat save one voting no, sent both measures to the Senate.

All eight Senate Democrats voted against the spending limit that some lawmakers understandably wanted in place before using Permanent Fund earnings for government spending. The POMV failed. All eight even turned their backs on a sales tax, and remarkably all but three rejected a long-term offer of an income tax, which tends to draw liberals like moths to a flame.

What they managed to do in the session was block any progress on a badly needed fiscal plan in the hope of punning that particular failure on "do nothing" Republicans in the fall.

So it is really a stretch for Democrats to pretend they honestly want to wedge talks about the complicated ELF structure into an already crowded special session agenda. At this point, who can really believe their spiel after they have spent months working against the state's best interests? What they are doing now is clearly, at the state's great expense, just more of the same.

Growing boulders in the garden

By ELISE PATKOTAK

When I first moved down from Barrow to Anchorage and realized the size of the yard for which I was responsible, I panicked a little. In Barrow, being responsible for a yard meant making sure the dead car, two partial St. Doses and the debris of what once had been an ATM were neatly stacked. In Anchorage, it was clear that maintaining a yard would involve green living things. A friend assured me that as time went by I would become more and more comfortable with my yard, until I reached the point where I couldn't wait for spring to arrive so I could work in it.

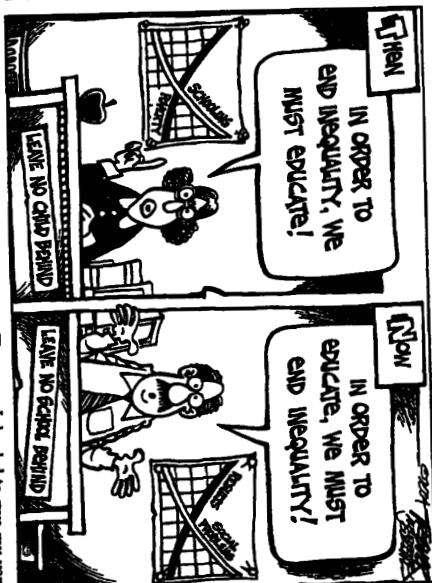
Well, it's been five years now and that epiphany has not yet occurred. In fact, this spring, as the snow melted and the remnants of what I laughingly referred to as my flower garden reappeared, I seriously considered just overhauling my entire yard with plastic and then dumping stones on top. No watering, no lawn service, no bugs, no beautiful flowers to be roughly tended to that turn out to be weeds — it would be like living in Barrow again.



I confess that my first year in Anchorage I did not go to any lengths to figure out how to grow any plants. In fact, if I remember rightly, I bought a gallon-sized jug of wildflowers and scattered them like chicken feed. It wasn't all much later, when that burst of energy proved fruitless, that a friend suggested I should have perhaps actually buried them or, at a minimum, watered them.

By my second year here, I had figured out that there were plants called annuals and plants called perennials. It didn't take me but a minute to figure out that perennials were the way to go since they supposedly came back again each year on their own.

So I went to various stores in town



and bought one of every perennial that set on their shelves, and planted them. This time I remembered to water even if I didn't remember to fertilize or mulch (and seriously does anyone really know or care what mulch actually is?) Some came up. Some struggled valiantly but in the end could not overcome the hand-heap of being my plants.

The third year not many of the perennials came back. They almost did. But then they didn't. That's when I found out you have to read a little label on the plants that says if they like direct sunlight or shade. Who knew? I figured after a long Alaskan winter, everything in this state would want sunlight.

So I went out and bought more perennials and this time paid attention to where they should go around my house. And they grew. And they grew. And then I realized I should have paid attention to what the label had said about their size because I had a couple of giant plants taking over the garden.

By last year I had pretty much had it. The whole idea of a garden I let out that plants survived the winter return on their own and those that didn't make it were memorialized by the bare spot in the garden where they once flourished.

Thanks to Pat, I'll actually have a garden this year. But I think the bigger lesson of this story is that you can take the girl out of Barrow, but you can't take Barrow out of the girl.

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage five-times writer and author of *Parallel Logic*, a humorous look back at her 23 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Pseudos Corp Ltd, a writing/graphic company.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

ARMY FACTORS COMMUNITY CONCERNS INTO ...

Fence plans

THE U.S. ARMY ALASKA announced last week that it is changing its plans for the new perimeter fence around the Fort Richardson back country.

In doing so, the Army once again demonstrated that it is a good neighbor to Anchorage and willing to take community concerns into account in its decisions.

Fort Richardson's boundaries include 62,000 acres of prime land surrounded by Chigachik State Park, Knik Arm, Muldoon and Elmendorf Air Force Base. The fence decision will allow limited recreational access to a substantial portion of the Army property.

Much of the land has been available for civilian access for years. Then last fall, Fort Richardson announced plans to enclose the property with an 8-foot, chain-link fence, topped in some places by barbed wire and in others by galvanized pipe rails. The fence would be 34 miles long.

The announcement brought an outcry by neighbors about the visual impact of the high fence on their property and by recreationists who use the land for activities such as hiking, biking, sking, dog walking and mushing.

ARMY OFFICIALS met with the community shortly afterward and agreed to take a look at other options that would alleviate public concerns but still meet the military's objectives for the fence. Those were to:

- Delineate the Fort Rich boundaries and let people know when they are entering military training land;
- Deter vehicle and pedestrian trespassers and reduce illegal activities like poaching and dumping trash;
- Reduce vulnerability to intrusion by vehicles and pedestrians into the core cantonment area where military people live and work; and
- Allow soldiers to train safely and efficiently and reduce the number of guards posted along training area boundaries during training events.

Col. Donna Bolz, garrison commander for the U.S. Army Alaska, said the fence question had been reconsidered and military officials had determined they could meet their objectives with a 40-inch-high, pipe-and-rail fence, one that can be climbed over or under for access for legitimate activities.

A full 8-foot chain-link fence with barbed wire will be built around the core area of the base, leaving the outer sectors available for controlled recreational access.

When and if the shorter fence is built, the public should respond to the military's positive approach by cooperating when using base property. That will mean phoning in to request permission for travel in off-trail areas and to find out which areas are off-limits because they are in use.

The revised fence plan will be open for comment for 30 days. By our thinking, one most appropriate comment for the days. To our thinking, one most appropriate comment for the days. To our thinking, one most appropriate comment for the days.

Seniors: Ignore medicare tactics

By SEN. LISA MURKOWSKI

I am very disappointed to see the propaganda that some have been using recently in order to scare seniors about the new Medicare benefits. The Medicare prescription drug bill passed the Senate and House on a bipartisan basis, and it is unfortunate that there are still some trying to scare the 9,800 seniors in Alaska, who don't have any drug coverage at all, from getting the help they need and deserve.

The truth of the matter is that the new Medicare benefits have one special interest in mind: seniors. I've traveled across the state in my time as senator and I've had seniors tell me that they cannot afford to purchase the drugs that their doctor tells them they need in order to treat their high blood pressure. I've talked with seniors who couldn't find a doctor to treat them. I've talked with seniors who want Medicare to offer more preventive services to keep them healthy in the first place.



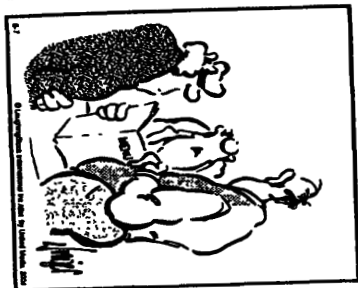
Sen. Lisa Murkowski.

And I told each of them that I agreed with them, and that I would take these messages to Washington and fight on their behalf. And that's just what I did.

Alaskans need to understand that the recent attacks on Medicare are motivated by politics rather than policy. Those who claim to be fighting for seniors don't want Alaskans to know that 9,800 seniors in Alaska don't have drug coverage for the first time under the new Medicare benefit.

They don't want Alaskans to know that 20,100 seniors in Alaska are not going to pay a premium at all to get a drug benefit that won't cost more than \$5 for a brand name drug, or \$2 for a generic drug.

Another 2,650 Alaskans will pay reduced premiums and deductibles for drug coverage. They don't want you to realize that the average senior in Alaska spends around \$1,600 per year on drugs, and that seniors who choose to



"We already do at home."

We just want to see how much we saved."

The Medicare Act also lowers drug prices by clearing drug pricing loopholes, allows generics to compete with brand name drugs sooner, and allows the prescription drug plans to negotiate drug prices for seniors.

There's been a lot of criticism of a provision in the reform law that doesn't allow Medicare itself to negotiate drug prices. But I need to remind Alaskans that this provision wasn't developed last year for this bill. It was developed by Democratic Sen. Tom Daschle, John Kerry and Ted Kennedy and included in the Medicare drug bill they introduced in 2000.

Why did they include that provision in their proposal? Because the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office found that allowing prescription drug plans to negotiate drug prices with the drug companies will save seniors \$18 billion over the next decade. The number crunchers discovered that the government doesn't do as good a job of negotiating lower drug prices as private plans do. Our goal was to allow seniors to have access to the lowest-priced drugs possible and this law does that.

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WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

The recent attacks on Medicare come at a very strategic time. This month is when seniors can enroll in a Medicare-approved drug discount card. Seniors enrolling on to new Medicare pay or call 1-800-MEDICARE 24 hours a day to find out more information about the drug discount cards in Alaska.

The only information seniors need to have on hand is their zip code, Medicare number, and an estimate of their monthly income level. This information will allow the attendant to find the card that will save the most money based on the drugs the senior uses, and also to find out whether the senior is eligible to have a \$600 subsidy added onto their card to spend on drugs.

The truth about the new Medicare Act is that Alaska's seniors are in the special interest. Congress had in mind in passing the law. It reduces Americans' drug costs, reduces seniors' out-of-pocket drug spending, improves Medicare payments to physicians, provides new coverage for cholesterol screenings, new coverage for diabetes screenings, better coverage for mammography, new "Welcome to Medicare" physical exams, and much more.

The truth is that we didn't form a prescription drug task force and call it a day — Congress improved seniors' health care, and Alaskans are entitled to the truth about them.

Medicare has been providing vital health security to seniors in Alaska since 1965, and it will continue to do so for years to come.

Now seniors will not only have medical benefits, but also the option to voluntarily enroll in affordable prescription drug coverage. The Medicare improvement is creating options for seniors in Alaska for the very first time in the history of the program.

I encourage Alaskans who have questions to contact any of the members of the congressional delegation, or call 1-800-MEDICARE for more information.

Lisa Murkowski represents Alaska in the U.S. Senate.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

BOOK REVIEW, FIRST-DEGREE...

Menaces

TO THOSE WHO man the Anchorage Police Department's traffic division — and specifically its Red Light Brigade — we have a suggestion.

They might want to park a patrol car at the corner of Benson Boulevard and Spelman Road on any morning during the rush hour. It's a prime intersection and the favorite time for lead-footed motorists who thumb their noses at yellow lights and speed through on the red.

On a recent morning at 8 o'clock, for example, the traffic light controlling eastbound traffic on Benson was well into its yellow cycle when four drivers whipped through without a thought of slowing down. And once the light was fully red, they were followed by a maniac doing about 50 miles an hour who just beat it through the intersection before traffic started moving on Spelman. Happens every day.

In mentioning this, we also acknowledge with thanks the letter we published last Saturday from Lt. Caroline Stevens, commander of the city police Traffic Enforcement Division, who said there has been a significant increase in the number of citations issued in the last quarter of the year. Good. Our only concern is that the effort continues, with committed vigor.

Herring fishery

THERE IS growing concern that obesity has become a worldwide problem, with some saying that people around the planet are putting on poundage.

The culprit? Junk food replacing traditional diets. Then there is the news that the market for Alaska herring roe has collapsed. The fish are spawning but there are no buyers in Japan, virtually the only market for the herring roe. Young Japanese are eating more Western foods.

Losing an important fishery to junk food seems an ignominious end to an Alaska tradition.

Ooops

DESPITE WHAT you might have read in this section Sunday, the community tribute to Lee and Ann Gorsuch is scheduled tomorrow night at the Sheraton.

We goofed in reporting that the event honoring the outgoing chancellor of the University of Alaska and his wife actually had taken place last Wednesday.

No, no, no. The party, jointly sponsored by Commonwealth North and UAA, begins this Wednesday with cocktails at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 and a program that will pay tribute to the Gorsuch years at the university. Gorsuch retired at the end of this school year. He and his wife are moving to Bellingham, Wash., to be closer to their grandchildren.

Gas price spike and political courage

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

In the mid-1970s, the twilight of America's oil innocence, the average new American car was a monster weighing 4,000 pounds. The oil shocks induced belated rationality into American oil habits. By 1981, the average car was down to 3,202 pounds.

By the mid-80s, rational consumer reaction to high prices — home insulation, fuel-efficient appliances and lighter cars — had actually solved the energy crisis. We had OPEC on the run. In July 1986, oil plunged to \$7 a barrel.

It is now \$41 a barrel. We had a gold-on moment, and we let it pass. The way to lock in our gains then would have been to artificially raise the price of gasoline with a tax that would depress consumption, maintain consumer demand for fuel efficiency and, most important, undercut much of the pump price into the U.S. economy (via the U.S. Treasury) rather than having it shipped to Saudi Arabia, Russia and other sundry, less than friendly places.

Nothing, of course, was done. It was morning in America, and no politician ever got elected running on higher gasoline taxes. Americans got used to low oil prices again. Consumers once again acted rationally. The average car is now back up to 4,000 pounds. Pump prices have once again soared. Surprise.

This has occasioned a festival of cynicism. Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe blames higher prices on an administration that is "in the pocket of big oil." John Kerry blames Bush for not pressuring the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries. Kerry promises to "stand up to those OPEC nations and say, 'Enough.' " Oh, that I do it.

Kerry has another plan, too. He wants us to stop filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. This is not just a bad idea — the SPR is there for some catastrophic event, say a terrorist, nuclear attack or could wreck the U.S. economy. It is also a transparent pander. Kerry's suggestion would have a negligible effect on gasoline prices.

This finger-pointing is utter nonsense. Why are gas prices up? Well —



surprise again — demand is up and supply is down.

First, China's enormous economic growth is raising demand — and prices — for all kinds of commodities from steel to cement to oil. Until the late 1980s, China was a net energy exporter. Its newly developed appetites will now be putting pressure on energy prices for decades.

Second, the low oil prices of the 80s and 90s gave us an epidemic of gas-guzzling tanks on wheels. Americans have every right to shop for groceries in vehicles built for hunting elephants, but then they should stop whining about the inevitable oil price crunch that follows. Especially when they drive their SUVs to environmental rallies to prohibit drilling in the largest untapped oil field in North America because of an exquisite sensitivity for the making habits of Arctic caribou.

There is no free lunch. As demand has risen, U.S. oil production has declined — down 25 percent since 1986. Americans have every right to an eco-sensitivity that prevents drilling offshore, on federal lands or in the Arctic. But they should not be surprised when they end up dependent on — and paying through the nose to — Saudi Arabia, Russia and Iraq.

The fact is that for two decades neither party has distinguished itself on the issue of oil blackmail and price vulnerability. There is an obvious solution: Tax and drill. Democrats won't allow drilling, and neither party supports taxing.

The idea is for the government — through a tax — to establish a new floor for gasoline, say \$3 a gallon. If the world price were to rise above \$3, the tax would be zero. What we need is anything that will act as a brake on consumption. Since America consumes 45 percent of the world's gasoline, a significant reduction here would bring down the world price.

But the key is to then keep the tax. Indeed, let it increase to capture all of a price reduction.

Consumers still pay \$3, but the Saudis keep getting lower and lower world prices. The U.S. economy keeps the rest in the form of taxes — which should immediately be cycled back to consumers by a corresponding cut in, say, payroll or income taxes.

Keep gasoline prices high and American consumers will once again start demanding and buying lighter and more fuel-efficient cars — exactly as they did in the late 70s and early 80s. Prices will continue to drop, and the U.S. economy will capture the difference.

It's a perfectly virtuous circle. It requires only a modicum of political courage. Which is why it does not stand a chance of happening.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Company. Copyright 2004 The Washington Post Co.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

BUDGET PROBLEMS WORSE FOR...

Cuvinator

YOU THINK WE have budget problems? Ha! Consider the plight of California, where Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is wrestling with headaches left behind when his predecessor, Gray Davis, was recalled from office.

The Golden State is facing a \$15 billion budget shortfall. Unlike Alaska, it doesn't have a Constitutional Budget Reserve fund to draw on, and no \$28 billion in a Permanent Fund.

To help form a partial solution, Schwarzenegger has cobbled a deal with the California higher education systems that will result in having their funding slashed in the upcoming budget, in exchange for assurances that they will be made whole in the future.

The deal, worked out in Sacramento, has infuriated some Democratic legislators. They complain that the Legislature must be involved in any cure for the budget woes, and that it's improper for the governor and the universities to settle things between themselves.

It looks like Schwarzenegger figures the lawmakers are part of the problem, not part of the solution.

\$50 oil?

WILL THE PRICE of Alaska crude oil stay high or will it drift lower — or even plummet?

There are obviously no sure things in this world, but some experts are saying that growing demand in the developing world and finite supply could keep the price high for a long time to come.

The market price of North Slope crude hit a record high of \$40.23 per barrel recently and shows no sign of abating. Inflated crude prices are swelling state coffers as higher royalty and tax revenues pour in.

Presumably say, of course, that there is no way the situation can last. After all, what goes up must come down, right?

Among the growing number of experts who think otherwise is T. Boone Pickens, the West Texas oilman and financial speculator. He predicted last week that oil prices would never fall below \$30 again.

"I think you'll see \$50 a barrel before you see \$30," Pickens said.

Modern educational ineptitude: Lesson 2

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Several weeks ago, my column on teacher ineptitude was about the sorry state of teacher quality and concluded that while teacher ineptitude is neither flattering nor comfortable to confront, it we must if we're to do anything about our sorry state of education.

The situation is not pretty. Philadelphia schools are typical of poor-quality big-city schools. Susan Snyder, Philadelphia Inquirer staff writer, in her article "District to Help Teachers Pass Test" (March 24, 2004) reported "that half of the district's 690 middle school teachers who took exams in math, English, social studies and science in September and November failed." Other test results haven't been released. Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell said he understands "concerns that releasing the data could subject teachers to humiliation."

The undeniably fact that we must own up to is that many, perhaps most, of those who choose teaching as a profession represent the very bottom of the academic barrel.

Let's look at it. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) compiles loads of statistics on education. The NCES "Digest of Education Statistics" Table 136 shows average SAT scores by student characteristics for 2001. Students who select education as their major have the lowest SAT scores of any major (\$64).



It's the same story when education majors finish college and take tests for admission to graduate schools. In the case of the Graduate Record Examination, education majors have an average score that's the lowest (467) of all majors except for sociology majors (434).

Putting this in perspective, math majors score the highest (720), followed closely by economics in third place (625). It's roughly the same story for students taking the LSAT for admission to law schools.



"WE WILL WIN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE WORLD... IF WE HAVE TO CUT THEM OUT!"

law schools where the possible scores range between 120 and 180. Out of 29 majors, education majors ranked 26th, averaging a score of 148. Physics and mathematics majors came in first with a 158 score and economics majors third with 155. Readers can readily obtain this information by a Google search using the words "GRE major" and "LSAT major."

Though my column criticized teachers, I was pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the responses. Many teachers sent letters saying their experiences mirrored exactly what I reported. Quite a few wrote of horror stories of dealing with incompetent colleagues and administrators. There were also some fairly angry letters accusing me of "bashing teachers" and demanding an apology for doing so.

The fact of the matter is that there are many excellent, competent and dedicated teachers often working in systems that reward incompetence and abominable and penalize excellence and devotion.

Our nation has a serious education problem that easily threatens our future well-being. Corrective action requires that we acknowledge and correct deficiencies no matter how painful and embarrassing they might be. A good start in that direction is to examine successful

teacher-training programs and see if we have the guts to mandate them.

Hillside College in Michigan manages Hillside Academy, a K-12 primary and secondary school. At Hillside, no students major in education. Students major and minor in the subjects they will be teaching — specifically, biology, chemistry, English, French, German, history, Latin, mathematics, music, physical education, physics, science and Spanish. To be admitted to Hillside's Teacher Education Program, a student must have and maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

Needless to say, teacher incompetency isn't the only explanation for our education malaise. Parents who don't give a damn and students with minds and attitudes alien and hostile to the education process figure in as well.

There's not much politicians and the education establishment can do about these factors, however, it's entirely within their power to take measures such as those practiced at Hillside to ensure teacher competency.

Walter E. Williams is a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. His column is distributed by Creations Syndicate Inc., 6177 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045, (310) 337-7004.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

'SIX-MONTH SUPPLY' CLAIM IS...

A big lie

I S SEN. TOM DASCHLE a con man or just misguided? He could be both, of course, perhaps a misguided con man.

We refer in this instance to a comment the South Dakota Democrat made in response to a suggestion by Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham that the question of opening ANWR to oil and gas drilling should be revisited.

Daschle scoffed at the notion of revisiting the issue because of the soaring price of crude oil. He said dismissively that the coastal plan of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would yield only "a six-month supply."

That, of course, is the party line spouted by environmentalists and parroted by their friends in congress and elsewhere. It is also pure bullfeathers.

The six-month supply is based on misinformation about ANWR and the claim that the ANWR coastal plan contains only 3.2 billion barrels of recoverable oil.

It also suggests that ANWR's oil would be used up in six months. That could only occur if all of the oil could somehow be produced in that time — which it could not — and if it were the nation's only supply of oil during that period.

Actually, even if the false figure of 3.2 billion barrels were a true estimate, ANWR would be a significant and steady supply of crude oil to supplement the nation's other sources in meeting its energy needs. ANWR would be a cushion against interruption of supplies from the Middle East, far in excess.

BUT THAT phony 3.2 billion estimate is often attributed to a 1998 study by the U.S. Geological Survey. It may also have originated with a 1987 environmental impact statement by the Bureau of Land Management. It could also be based on a misinterpretation of data in the 1998 USGS report.

But the fact is that the USGS in 1998 concluded that the ANWR coastal plan contains 5.7 to 16 billion barrels of recoverable crude oil. And the most likely amount is 10.4 billion barrels, which — if it proved to be accurate — would increase the nation's oil reserves by half.

Senate Minority Leader Daschle has access to this information and should know it, but he and most other ANWR critics prefer to repeat the lies and bullfeathers they have spouted for years.

With the nation's energy lifeline at constant risk in the Middle East, and with fuel costs skyrocketing, this would seem the perfect time for Congress to revisit the question of opening a portion of ANWR to drilling.

But with misinformation flying so thickly from the lips of green extremists and their misinformed — or perhaps dishonest — supporters, bringing the issue up again will be difficult.

If and when the ANWR issue is revived, let's hope the real numbers can be brought to the American public, and the lie about a "six-month supply" unveiled for what it is.

Moving time for Gina Marie and Tom

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

THE NATION'S CAPITAL will be the new home of Gina Marie Lindsey and Tom Dow, formerly big figures on the Anchorage aviation and tourism scenes and for the last 11 years powerhouses in similar posts in Seattle. Dow, an executive with Princess Cruises, has been named public affairs director of the line's parent company, Carnival Corp., and will handle major lobby chores in Washington, D.C. His wife was director of Anchorage International Airport when she was hired in 1983 by the Port of Seattle as the managing director of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. She has resigned her \$186,000-a-year job, effective in mid-August, to accompany Dow to Washington, where she said she expects to find work dealing with aviation industry policy issues.

FOR THE LAST decade, Gina Marie Lindsey has directed \$4 billion in airport terminal expansion construction. She also has been the leader in the struggle to give Sea-Tac a third runway. That project, the cost for which now has risen to more than \$1.2 billion, has been blocked time and again by a flood of environmental law.

Tobin



"I'm campaigning for the little guy."

of Anchorage. She won a major scholarship, valued at \$30,000 at least, at the mid-March Women in Aviation International convention at Reno. The scholarship will provide training in Alaska, Ga., from Delta Air Lines to become a pilot aboard Boeing 757 and 767 passenger jets. Mary Ann Eide, co-chairman of the WAIA scholarship committee, reports: "The training is really to enable her to fly with big planes" and enable her to secure a flight position — a job with a major airline, and of course Delta is hoping to be able to offer her a job after she successfully completes her training with them. There were 30 applicants for this one scholarship, so you can see Jane is a very superior candidate.

WHEN IT COMES to taking a little bit of pride in what has been accomplished, Commonwealth North is quibbling by celebrating its 25th anniversary as a public policy study group. Over its first quarter century, Commonwealth North has brought to Anchorage a couple of hundred notable speakers at its breakfast and luncheon forums. A small seminar and luncheon forum, a small seminar, John Shaw, then CEO of CSX Corp. and now Treasury secretary, Sir Martin Gilbert, Winston Churchill's official biographer, both Malcolm Forbes Jr., publisher of Forbes magazine, and his son, editor and presidential candidate Steve

Forbes, broadcast tycoon Ted Turner, founder of CNN, political activist and author Larry King, former FBI Director William Webster, former FBI director, EPA administrator and U.S. attorney general William Rusher, Del Lewis, president and CEO of National Public Radio, Ben Cohen of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, and Robert Helms, former president of the U.S. Olympic Committee. Its many study reports have dealt with such major issues as Alaska's role in the solution to the national energy crisis, challenges to Alaska as outlined in the much-scooped "Compass North" report, a major assessment of the state's urban-rural divide, and a recent in-depth look at providing Alaska jobs for Alaskans.

LAST WEDNESDAY, Commonwealth North joined UAA in a dinner at the Sheraton saluting Ann and Les Gorsuch, as the university chancellor and his wife prepare to take up retirement living in Bellingham, Wash. Gorsuch was a long-time member of the Commonwealth North board. Jane Lasek, newly re-elected vice president of the group and manager of community relations for Alyeska Pipeline, chaired the salute.

PRISTO-CHANGO: David Copperfield, one of the world's most famous magicians, will bring his dazzling stage show to Anchorage next spring. So reports the local magic community, pulling this rabbit out of his collective hat. Copperfield is scheduled for a fund-day run in the Alwood Concert Hall at the Performing Arts Center, Thursday through Sunday, March 3-6. During one of his many television performances, as many of you may have seen a couple of years ago, he made the Statue of Liberty vanish. Maybe he'll do the same for the PAC's leaky roof.

SUNDAY PUNDAY: Down in the hills of Tennessee, back in the woods where folks still operate their own stills out of the sight of the revenue, Clinton congratulated his pal, Thruway, on his recent marriage. "Was it a shotgun wedding?" asked Clint. "Guess so," said Thruway. "It was a case of wild or death."

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

SERIOUS QUESTIONS AROUND OVER ...

Leman's choice

LT GOV LOREN LEMAN's announcement that he will support Mike Miller's primary election bid to unseat Sen. Lisa Murkowski is one of the more oddball developments to come along in Alaska political circles. Putting aside the obvious questions about his loyalty to the administration of Gov. Frank Murkowski, his sense of ethics and his judgment, there are other points to be raised. First, will the lieutenant governor use state time, money and resources to campaign for his longshot candidate? How will the public know if his trips here and trips there are for state business or for campaigning?

Second, and perhaps more important, does a lieutenant governor who oversees the state's elections system have a conflict of interest in endorsing a candidate for office? We think the answer to that is obvious.

In our view, the lieutenant governor should remain above politics during the election cycle to avoid even an appearance of impropriety — considering that he is not himself a candidate this year.

Leman says he likes Miller better because, in his mind, Miller is more conservative than Sen. Murkowski. So? Leman, not Lisa Murkowski, is the one who comes out looking badly in all of this. He got elected to his statewide office by riding the coattails of Frank Murkowski — learned, as they were, on the general election ballot two years ago. But he comes across as a lousy teamate.

YOU SIMPLY have to question the man's judgment, including his actions in babbling to Washington to conservative think tank founder Paul Weyrich, saying that Lisa Murkowski's election campaign will fail. Those comments made their way onto the Free Congress Web site — and into newspaper headlines.

After blindsiding the governor and senator by expressing those views, Leman then told a senior member of Gov. Murkowski's staff — not Murkowski himself, mind you — of his intentions to endorse Miller.

Naturally, Democrats love to have Republicans shoot themselves in the foot, reload and do it again. Look at Alaska's political history.

Likes reflective paint idea
We most certainly do use studded snow tires during winter in Kodiak. This is the slickest, most icy place I have ever driven, and I've lived in Alaska most of my life.

In your May 18 "Whole paint" editorial you state, "In Kodiak and some communities in the rain country of Southeastern Alaska, the road stripes are painted with a fluorescent compound that glows in the beam of auto headlights. The reflective paint can be used in those places because tires don't have studs and plows are not needed to push away the rain, so the stripes last longer." Personally, I've never seen or heard of this reflective paint, but it is a really good idea.

Jake Jacobson,
Kodiak

Here's the wrath

Your May 13 editorial asks: Where is the wrath of the Muslim world over this despicable act? That despicable act of course being the awful, indefensible beheading of American Nick Berg.

Here are a few Web site headlines: "NJ Muslims denounce Nick Berg beheading," "Saudi official condemns Berg beheading," "Aust Muslims slam beheading," "Beheading an 'ugly crime,'" "Denton Muslims condemn contractor's slaying in Iraq," "Three Arab states condemn American's beheading," "Hizbollah, Hamas condemn beheading."

Let's remember not to confuse terrorism and religion.

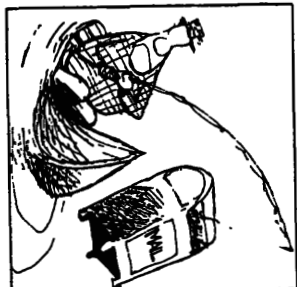
Craig William Black
Eagle River

APD is busy writing tickets

On behalf of the Anchorage Police Department and its 14 member traffic unit, please let me add some relevant facts to the May 10 editorial about catching red light runners in our city.

In November 2003 at the direction of Mayor Beggs, the Anchorage Police Department reallocated its current resources to slowly begin rebuilding a long overdue traffic unit. Part of our mission was to focus on red light violations, speeding, and a number of other moving violations. Our success had been tremendous.

Letters to The Times



Ben Hilliker, a hero

Alaska lost one of its best when Ben Hilliker succumbed to heart disease late last month. Ben was an amazing man.

He worked hard for fish and wildlife conservation when he was the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and later at the Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

An accomplished waterfowl and upland bird hunter, he used a 20-gauge shotgun and was deadly with it. He almost never missed a bird and when he did he would get his teeth, winces a funny smile and mutter, "getting old and bald bird."

Red salmon were not safe when Ben was on the Kana River, as he was every summer. I remember the determination and strength he showed the opening day of duck season just a few weeks following surgery for cancer. With more than 100 staples in the rib cage, hurting beyond belief, he was determined to join his friends to shoot birds on opening day.

I also remember an evening run to Dad's Fish Camp to catch some reds. He was piloting his Caddy at 80 mph across the Turnagain Flats, me in the co-pilot's seat, windows all open and classical music — not country-western, not rock — classical music blaring as loud as it would go from his tape player. We're all lost a good servantman who did his duty. Alaska has lost a dedicated servant, wildlife in Alaska have lost a champion, and me, I've lost a hero.

Vern Higgins
West Palm Beach, Florida

Editor's note: The Anchorage Times asked the Anchorage Police Department for data on red light citations in the first quarter of 2004, but the information was not supplied until after the editorial was published.

They should lead by example
You think they forget the "grapefruit what you present rule" I live in South Anchorage and remember another of

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

BUSH HANGS TOUGH ON . . .

Reserve issue

DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL hopeful John Kerry seemingly cannot find enough ways to prove to the American people he is a lousy choice for this nation's top elected post. Now he is wading in on high gasoline prices.

"We need a president who is fighting for the American worker, the American family at the fuel pump," he told a crowd in Oregon this week.

That seems strange coming from a man who has worked long and hard to saddleback exploration and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge — which President George Bush supported. Kerry has done little or nothing to boost exploration and production anywhere else in this country either, and he worked to block a comprehensive energy policy offered by Bush three years ago.

While Kerry now postures before adoring television crowds and frets about how the gas price increase affects the average working man, it should be noted that in the past he has voted for increased gas taxes no fewer than 10 times. Apparently, in his view, added costs because of increased taxes have no effect on working families.

Now he has mustered the unimpeachable gill to blame Bush for soaring gas prices.

IT IS NOTHING short of amazing that Kerry and other Democrats so beholden to environmental zealots that they are willing to put those narrow interests above the nation's actually think voters are dumb enough to buy their scam largely are responsible for the current price increase — which boils down to a matter of supply and demand. The left has restricted oil exploration and production in this country's most promising prospects and now demand has outstripped supplies controlled by people who do not have America's best interests at heart. The result? Soaring gasoline prices.

And that somehow is Bush's fault? That strains even what passes for truth in an election year.

Kerry and others who have turned their backs on any kind of national energy policy that would ensure supplies and lower prices at the pump now are eyeing the Strategic Petroleum Reserve as a way to rain in skyrocketing gasoline prices. Kerry is suggesting that temporarily sidetracking shipments to the reserve might be a way to increase national supplies and reduce prices.

Bush rightly has refused to tap the reserve, saying it was created for emergencies. This nation, after all, is at war and draining the reserve would put America in a dangerous position. "We will not play politics with the Strategic Petroleum Reserve," he said.

Good for him. Good for the nation. Kerry again is showing his lack of presidential timber. If he and other Democrats now wringing their hands before the cameras need villains in the current price increases, they need only look to themselves.

Graduation invokes emotional journey

By PAUL JENKINS

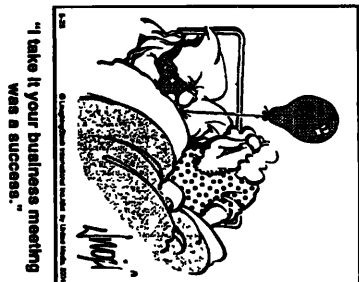
You could scarce the hope, the excitement, the anxiety among the crowd of thousands during last weekend's graduation ceremonies for about 1,600 students at the University of Nevada Reno. Every five seconds or so, a graduate's name was called and years of hard work and expense and successes and failures were rewarded with a single piece of paper that said yes, you've graduated, but no, this is not your diploma. That will be sent along in a few weeks.

My son, Josh, fidgeted with his friends in the undulating sea of black mortarboards and gowns, waiting for his turn to walk across the stage, collect his degree in criminal justice and step into the next chapter of his young life. We depended on some of the most uncomfortable folding chairs extant. All around us, family and friends would erupt in cheers and shouts when their graduate's name was called.



Waiting under overcast skies for the ceremonies to run their course on the university's magnificent, tree-lined quadrangle, I realized it was as much a milestone for his mother and me as it was for Josh. At that moment, in the hustle and bustle and happiness of the day, a crystal clear memory popped into my head.

It was a sunny crisp fall afternoon, just after a football game at Chugach High School some years ago. I do not remember who won. The players, including Josh, had lined up on the sidelines to salute their parents up in the grandstands, somewhat of a tradition at the school. Afterward, it took a few moments for us to pick our way down to the crowd and players at the field's edge, and we just missed him. As we watched, waving and calling his name, he was swept away in a flood of football jerseys heading for the locker room. In my memory, the scene always plays out in



"I take it your business meeting was a success."

black and white and there is no sound. None. There is only Josh being carried along, farther and farther away.

But he stops and turns toward us as the other players sweep by on either side, seemingly in slow motion. He is the only one not moving on the field, a smiling statue in a surging river of humanity. He waves and holds his helmet high. Then, in an instant, he turns and is gone. I remember having a hard time catching my breath. A sadness wrapped my soul like a wool blanket. I felt for the first time disconnected, rudderless. If you are not going to be a dad, I asked myself, what will you be? The years settled on my shoulders like an old woman's shawl.

The metaphor in all this is not lost on me. That afternoon was the first time I actually accepted reality: that Josh was growing up. It was the first time I acknowledged that one day he would be swept away by life itself. It had never really occurred to me before. He always was going to be in school. He was always going to be a kid. Clean up your room is your homework done? Who is that you are going out with? He graduated from high school, but he was still my kid. Still in school.

As the warm Nevada sun chased the overcast away Saturday morning, the lot was now a man waiting impatiently among other men and women who paid their dues to be there. One after another they are called to the stage. Joshua Somebody-or-Other gets us to our feet. False alarm. But then, there it is. Joshua Walker Jenkins. And there he was. On stage. Hood. He tells Dad pictures taken from too far away. Is that him? Where did he go?

A few minutes later he joins us, beaming, faux diploma rolled up in his hand. He tells his mother and grandfather and fiancé and brother he did not hear anything after his name was called. Neither did I.

That little piece of paper, that promise of a proper document to come, did not look like much, but it certainly came dear. Josh did it the hard way. He worked full time and went to school full time. He and Charly drove south a few years ago on the Alaska Highway in a rattlesnake old Bronco that I would not have driven to the store. They landed in Las Vegas, a city where they knew absolutely nobody and they dug in, working and going to school. One heck of a team. Then they picked up stakes and moved to Reno and did it all again. I cannot imagine myself having that kind of gumption.

All of that ran through my mind, sitting there in the warm sunlight trying not to let anybody see me smiling like a little girl. What I felt most, I suppose, was pride. It's hard sometimes to tell your kids you love them, that you are proud just to know them, that you measure your life not in their success but in their happiness. You cry, but they cannot yet fathom the depth of those feelings, that will come later. They will learn that one person's bitterness ending is another's joyous beginning.

Maybe, years down the road, he'll be perched on an uncomfortable folding chair in a university quadrangle somewhere, waiting to hear his son or daughter's name called. Maybe he'll pull this column out of his pocket and read it. Then he'll know how proud his mother and I were on that Saturday in Reno.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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SENATE DEMOCRATS SHOULD PLAY ...

No more games

WHILE APOLOGISTS fawn over Senate Democrats who irresponsibly torpedoed any kind of a fiscal plan during the legislative session, you have to worry about the potential costs of partisan politics in the Alaska Legislature. Where will it end? Despite an overwhelming majority of Alaskans wanting, even demanding, a fiscal plan, how far will Democrats go in their long-term drive to regain control of the Legislature and get their U.S. Senate candidate elected? As of now, they have undercut any effort to address the problem, likely in the hope that voters will take out their frustration on Republicans at the polls. But you have to wonder what they will say if the budget gap widens unexpectedly, forcing layoffs and painful cuts in state spending that will ripple through the economy. You have to wonder what the so-called Dividend Democrats who put Alaskans' free money above the welfare of the state will say to those who lose their jobs or their homes.

Yes, oil prices are high, temporarily shrinking the fiscal gap to a manageable number, but those prices could plunge tomorrow on a whim, pushing the state budget deep into the red. No, Alaska's fiscal situation does not warrant panic — we have \$28 billion in the bank, after all — but when better to set policy than in a time of relative calm?

THE HOUSE did its job, despite the best efforts of Democrats there to sink the necessary two-thirds vote needed for constitutional amendments. It sent to the Senate proposals that would have allowed Alaskans to vote on a spending limit and changing the calculation of Permanent Fund earnings to a percent-of-market-value approach. All the details were to be worked out later by statute.

But in the Senate it was a vastly different story. All eight Democrats in that chamber voted to block the spending limit, needed to assure some Republicans that the POMV was not a license to spend. And the POMV proposal? Down in flames 5-15.

Even when a sales tax was offered, by a Republican, no less, all the Senate Democrats voted no. When an income tax was offered, again by a Republican, only three Democrats, one from Juneau and two from rural Alaska, had the courage to vote yes — despite income taxes being a reasonable political campaign for liberals.

What became clear as the session closed is that lockstep partisan politics and dirty slogans have become more important to Democrats than working for the good of the state, that it is more important for them to posture than act. They want Alaskans to believe they are working in their interest. How can that be? How can failing to address the single biggest issue in the state be in its best interests?

Democrats in the Senate who have become little more than obstructionists may be surprised at what Alaskans remember when it's time to vote. Very surprised, indeed.

No safety when Legislature in session

By REP. VIC KOHRING

"No man's life, liberty, or property are safe while the legislature is in session."

New York Judge Gordon T. Under was strikingly correct in his famous 1866 aphorism, but no more than what almost happened during the 23rd Alaska Legislature, which ended May 11th.

Numerous taxes were proposed by both legislators and the governor. The individual Alaskan almost had his financial hide whooped if it were not for two main factors that saved him.

Those two? The recent dramatic increase in oil prices, which wiped out Alaska's deficit virtually overnight, and the fact that this is an election year and few politicians want to be on record for having voted for taxes.

Regardless of these reasons, I commend my colleagues for rejecting at least the major taxes. I'm pleased I can return to the Mat-Su and inform my constituents that their wallets are safe for another year. We rejected a statewide sales tax, an income tax and additional industry taxes, all pushed frantically by the left wing media.

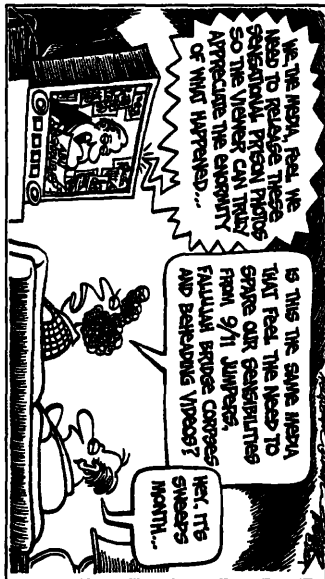
It's more obvious to me than ever after watching this year's legislative process in Juneau, that if our goal is to stimulate the economy, we should provide a conducive climate for the private sector, which is where real wealth is created. If we want families and small businesses to be financially independent and successful, then the solution is definitely not new burdensome taxes but, instead, put government on a strict diet.

I heard many excuses to justify taking more of Alaskans' hard-earned money. One was that people would be "more connected" to government if they were taxed, and therefore would have more care and concern if they "contributed" more.

The suggested theory of "contributing" your money to that the government is a snake-oil salesman, because in reality, people are never asked to make "contributions."



Kohring



They are ordered by government, backed up with the force of law, to either pay up or have their property ultimately seized by armed government agents.

Another excuse I heard was that Thomas Jefferson would think it proper that citizens become financially "involved" in government.

To boot, Jefferson's advocacy of limited government is ridiculous. The proponents of this luxury obviously have never studied Jefferson fully. If he were alive today, he would shake at all the government waste and inefficiency and the multitude of touchy-feely programs we have created in Alaska over a generation. Jefferson would have cut government spending and put an end to social engineering.

I don't know which is worse, using a famous American founding father to promote big government — directly contrary to his political philosophy — or repeating the mantra that "We have cut government spending to the bone, and can't go any further." Dragging Thomas Jefferson through such mendacity and not being up front about what is needed, to get rid of the nonsense in our budget, is unfortunate.

We can turn further. We have over 24,000 government workers running a huge array of programs that spend billions a year, that could be comfortably reduced through national election and get us back to a more manageable number.

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We, Kohring is a Republican, and representative Wendell and the Mat-Su in the Alaska Legislature.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

TONY KNOWLES BARKS UP ...

Wrong tree

DEMOCRATIC SENATE hopeful Tony Knowles made an impassioned plea for changes in the nation's health care system a week or so ago as he somberly addressed a handful of senior citizens — and a TV cameraman — who had been rounded up to hear his campaign speech. Too bad for Tony, but his comments rang hollow — or, more precisely, echoed from the Democratic national play book, designed more to frighten older people than to enlighten voters about what really is going on to improve aid to seniors.

Mostly, his talk was simply disingenuous. A tremendous leap forward in increasing health care opportunities for older citizens was specifically taken recently through the skilled work of Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who Knowles is trying to oust in November's election.

Of course Knowles made no mention of this — saying not a word about how the state's junior Republican senator obtained congressional passage of an Alaska-only amendment that has increased Medicare payments here to 167 percent of the national average.

The immediate result was to increase significantly the number of Alaska doctors who now will agree to see Medicare patients. Talk to any doctor and they'll tell you of the importance of this Lasz-powered provision.

Too bad Knowles didn't call attention to this. Some of the elderly people he lined up to listen to his made-for-TV speech might have enjoyed hearing the full story.

It's going to be a long time between now and November. We fear we'll see much more of such campaign ploys from the Knowles camp before election day finally rolls around.

Moms march

IF THERE ever was an indication that the gun control issue is a loser for Democrats seeking office, it must be the recent "Million Mom March" in the nation's capital that drew only 2,000 or 3,000 participants.

The march's aim was to launch a campaign to win bipartisan congressional backing to extend the ridiculous ban on so-called assault rifles, which expires in September.

Said the Wall Street Journal:

"The real agenda here was illustrated by the mannequin of George W. Bush that, as the Washington Post reported, people were invited to pummel. So what if Mr. Bush supports an extension of the ban and has said he'll sign an extension if it reaches his desk."

The march was dreamed up during the Clinton years by Donna Dees-Thomases, sister-in-law of Susan Thomases, a longtime pal of Hillary Clinton's.

Sen. Clinton, by the way, did not bother to attend. Gun control is a Democratic loser, indeed.

Forget about moving city moose

By ELISE PATKOTAK

There's an old joke we used to tell on Anchorage when I lived in the Bush. We'd say that Anchorage was as close as you could get to Alaska without actually being there.

The more complaints I read in the paper about the moose and bears we share our world with here, the more I realize that maybe that wasn't a joke. I moved to Alaska from the most urbanized part of America — that great megapolitan that starts in Boston and ends in Washington, D.C. The only wildlife you see along that corridor are the deer eating on the side of the road on the Garden State Parkway or Pennsylvania Turnpike. They have become so numerous that they are considered a hazard to traffic now.

Thus could, of course, have something to do with the fact that all their natural predators were wiped out years ago, but the deer were just so, well, cute, that they were allowed to thrive. And thrive they did — to the point where they are now starving because there isn't enough vegetation left in Jersey to support them. Which will come as no surprise to anyone who has ever driven in Jersey.

The idea of a limited hunt has been raised in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I'm not sure where that idea stands now, but I know that for a long time people were protesting it, because no one could stand the thought that someone might kill Beaum's mom.

Better they should starve to death. At least you don't have to see that happen unless the deer accidentally stumbled out onto the highway while in the last throes of starvation. In which case it would get creamed by some gambler doing 90 mph down the expressway heading for his destiny in Atlantic City, so no one would know it had been starving to death anyway.

As I was growing up on the East Coast, these deer constituted my whole world.



Patkotak



view of nature and wildlife unless I counted the seagulls and penguins on the boardwalk or the crabs on the beach. All other animals were where they properly belonged, in the Philadelphia Zoo behind bars.

So when I came to Alaska, part of the allure was that I would be coming to a place where people and nature were co-existing in some fashion or another. I was coming to a place where wolves, fox, eagles, moose and bear could be found literally outside your front door. It was part of the mystique and magic that the word Alaska conjured up in the head of a young woman who thought a stray dog was an encounter with nature.

I moved to Barrow and found nature literally outside my front door. And I learned about the reality of nature. I learned that the meat I ate at dinner came from animals that looked very much like Beaum's mom. I learned that polar bears had been using the land I now lived on for hundreds of thousands of years as a short cut from the Beaufort to the Chukchi Sea. I learned that they still were doing that, and I would have to adjust if I wanted to share

their world. It was an adjustment worth making. Now some people in Anchorage want to take away one of the few remaining links this city has with Alaska. Take away the moose that wander our streets and you might as well live in any middle-size city anywhere in the Lower 48. If you want a city of box stores, a limited downtown, ugly urban sprawl, as realized through acres upon acres of toaster houses with no distinguishing social value — an urban slice of white bread covered in mayonnaise — then move to any thousands of safe places in the lower 48.

But this is Alaska. And in Alaska we do things differently than they do Outside. Or at least I thought we did. I thought we learned to co-exist with nature. I thought we knew how to live with moose and bear, eagles and geese. Take them away and Anchorage becomes Anywhere, U.S.A.

And no one in their right mind would go through a winter with 111 inches of snow to live in Anywhere, U.S.A.

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Parallels Logic*, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Pseudonym Corp. Ltd., a writing/graphics company.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Senior Editor

White paint

lie seen since last fall. — I saw my wife and son

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

andrew

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BY CHARLES KRAUHAMMER

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associate editor IAN STREY

WASHINGTON—

ATLANTIAN SLIPS
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BEHIND HIM AND SCORCHED
BECAME IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY
OF THE WORLD IN 1923.

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AND THIS DENIED HE IS SURVIVED BY A LADDER RECONSTRUCTION.

DEATHS



1920s Today

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American Soldiers

Disability does not hinge on the

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BILL J. ELLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Monday, May 17, 2004 B-5

LIBERATION FROM MURDEROUS THUGS IS ...

Ultimate goal

THE GRUESOME debauching of American contractor Nick Berg by a group in Iraq affiliated with al-Qaida brings into sharp contrast the combatants in the war on terror. Americans rightly were angered at pictures of Iraqi detainees being humiliated at Abu Ghraib prison. Investigators were launched Congress held hearings. Those involved face serious charges. Apologies were offered. Al-Qaida's reaction to the photos? It used them as an excuse to kill a kid from a Philadelphia suburb.

Berg's grisly murder was shown on an Islamic militant Web site. Justifying the butchery as revenge for mistreatment of Iraqi detainees, five cowards wearing scarves and ski masks read a statement as Berg knelt in front of them. Then they cut off his head with a large knife.

The video was titled, "Abu Musab al-Zarqawi shown slaughtering an American," although it is not certain he did the killing. Al-Zarqawi is one of Osama bin Laden's key lieutenants. Already commentators are tut-tutting that what happened at Abu Ghraib caused Berg's death. But that is absurd.

The enemy has proved it needs no excuse to kill. Al-Qaida murdered 3,000 men, women and children on 9/11. Four American civilian contractors earlier this year were killed, dragged through the streets of Fallujah, their bodies burned and hung from a bridge. Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl was murdered in the same barbaric fashion as Berg, long before the poorly trained Reserve unit that embarrassed this nation at Abu Ghraib prison even set foot on an airliner with explosives in his shoes.

THE BUTCHERY goes on and on. Americans Italians Rumanians Britons Canadians Russians. And some among us believe Iraq men being forced to wear dog collars at Abu Ghraib had something to do with those deaths? They were slain because the civilized world is locked in a fight to the death with incontinent savages who seize upon any reason to kill.

Too many of us just do not get it. This nation must remain focused and resolute. There is no leaving this conflict, no cutting and running just because a war we did not want or seek is messy and sometimes offends our all-too-delicate sensibilities. Those who mistreated prisoners in Abu Ghraib must be punished. What they did runs against the American grain. It is incumbent upon Congress and the Bush administration to ensure it never happens again.

That said, there are much larger issues. We must keep in mind our ultimate goal of a liberated and democratic Iraq, free of the murderous thugs now doing whatever they can to keep its people enslaved.

To reach that most worthy goal, we must not lose heart. Our lives and freedoms, and the lives and freedoms of innocent Iraqi citizens, hang in the balance.

Put Iraq atrocities into perspective

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

It's the end of the semester at George Mason University, and for the past couple of weeks I've been too busy preparing final exam harassment for my students to pay much attention to all the news stories about how US soldiers were torturing Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison. Now that my spring semester work has just about been completed, I decided to bring myself up to speed on these American atrocities.

I traced myself far the work. Part of my 1969 Fort Jackson, S.C., basic training involved lessons on evasion and escape. Our drill sergeant, who had fought in the Korean War, told us about how North Koreans tortured American prisoners of war. His graphic descriptions gave us added incentive to pay attention to what we were being taught about evasion and escape.



Remembering his graphic descriptions and given the worldwide condemnation of our soldiers, I was prepared to see pictures of American soldiers engaged in atrocities such as eye gouging, piercing of prisoners' hands and knees with electric drills, beating soles of prisoners' feet, Williams

cigarette burns, fingernail extraction, whipping and placing prisoners in acid baths.

I also thought I might see pictures of Iraqis looking like the diseased and starved World War II American prisoners of the Japanese who were brutally marched from Bataan to Camp O'Donell. When they were liberated from Japanese prisoner-of-war camps, many didn't weigh much over 100 pounds, if that.

Much to my surprise, I saw none of this. What I saw in no way could be described as torture or atrocities, at least if we stick to historical definitions of torture and atrocities. Among the pictures I saw were Sgt. Lynndee England with a dog leash tied to a naked Iraqi Iraqi



prisoners forced to parade naked before their peering captors? Two American soldiers — a male and a female — forcing a group of Iraqi prisoners into simulating group sex. An American female soldier playing with two naked Iraqi captives. A British soldier urinating on an Iraqi prisoner. Of the pictures I saw, the worst acts shown were an Iraqi woman being gagged-taped and an American soldier putting a rifle butt to an Iraqi prisoner's groin.

These acts aren't anything that Americans should be proud of, but at the same time, they don't qualify as torture and atrocities so far as these terms have been historically defined. Moreover, they are mild in comparison to the kind of prison treatment to which Iraqis have become accustomed.

Before we condemn our soldiers too much, we might consider that this war is the most humane war ever fought. In capturing the Saddam Hussein regime, there were relatively few non-combatant casualties. Afterward, our troops and American and foreign civilians went to great lengths to begin to rebuild the country, and much of that rebuilding has little to do with what was destroyed in war.

How has this unprecedented effort been rewarded? Our soldiers have been humiliated and murdered by Hussein hooligans and Muslim fanatics. American and foreign civilians have been brutally murdered and their corpses treated in unspeakable ways — and all of this to the glory of large Iraqi mobs.

We should keep in mind that our soldiers are humane. I think it's understandable that they might want revenge against perpetrators who've been involved with the murder and maiming of their comrades.

Don't get me wrong about this. Their actions are not to be condoned. But if President Bush and Congress want to know whether our soldiers deserve to be sent to Iraq, I suggest they ask for more American Japanese POWs or, better yet, ask former Hanoi Hilton resident Sean John McCain.

By the way, if our soldiers are to be court-martialed for anything, it should be for stupidity — stupidity of permitting photos to be taken of what they were doing.

Walter E. Williams is a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. His column is distributed by Creators Syndicate Inc., 677 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045; (310) 357-7003.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

LET'S HOPE FT. RICH WITHSTANDS . . .

Base closures

THERE ARE NO specific early warning signs out, but the concern about the future of Fort Richardson remains as once again the Department of Defense puts in motion the latest round of base closure studies.

This is the 2005 look under an on-going program known formally as Base Realignment and Closures — and informally by the acronym BRAC.

Fort Rich has been on the preliminary list of previous base closure studies, but the final recommendations that went forward spared the largest Army base in Alaska. Since then, Fort Rich's role in the military's new training operations has been heightened by the arrival of new Stryker brigade forces — and that offers some comfort that it will escape the next round of closures. However, nothing is a sure bet.

The fate of Fort Rich — and all military bases elsewhere in the country — will be in the hands of four men named by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld to the final review panel. The four are:

- Griffin B. Bell, former U.S. attorney general and former judge of the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals
- Edward G. Biesel, former Pennsylvania congressman and former state attorney general, who now is judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Bucks County, Pa.
- William T. Coleman, former secretary of Transportation.
- Frank Williams, chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court.

EACH OF THE four will be commissioned as Army major generals to serve a two-year term during which they will meet, intermittently, to consider base closure studies.

They will be reviewing reports submitted by military commanders, something of the first-time group looking into which bases ultimately will be targeted for realignment or closures. The work, from Alaska's standpoint, is serious business. Among other things, the closure of Fort Richardson would be a crippling economic blow to Anchorage.

That's one reason why the fuses and fuses created some months ago in opposition to Army plans to build a fence along military grounds on the east side of town had such dire implications. The opposition came from a small number of residents who had become used to enjoying extra space in their back yards, figuring that Army training storage really was their personal property.

The BRAC people in the past have taken a close look at community support of the military, and posts and bases where public opposition to training needs were special targets for closure.

Fortunately, the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce is closely following the new round of BRAC studies and readying materials supporting the case for maintaining Fort Richardson as a vibrant part of the Army's base structure. Support from the whole community is called for as the new round of BRAC proceeds.

Celebrating Kay Linton's fountain dream

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

KAY LINTON'S BIG dream of a lovely fountain on the lawn of the Z.J. Lousiac Library finally will come to fruition in a ceremony that will begin at 1:30 p.m. next Sunday — at the rededication of the fountain that was constructed as part of Alaska's silver anniversary celebration 20 years ago. The only trouble was that it never really worked. Kay Linton's energetic efforts raised the money for the fountain back then, and in recent years — before her death, more than a year ago — she renewed the long-neglected refurbishing effort. Now back in shape to do the job it was intended to do — thanks to a lot of contributions from local business men and women — it will be formally named the Mrs. Jack M. (Kay) Linton Memorial Fountain, honoring one of Anchorage's most dedicated volunteers. In summer, the fountain will have flowing waters. In winter, it will be an ice sculpture.

BACK WHEN THE state was celebrating its centennial — the 100th anniversary of the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 for \$12 million — one of the most popular attractions was a steam-powered locomotive called the Moose Goose. It pulled a little train that provided rides from downtown Anchorage to the centennial site at Anchorage International Airport, and was a season-long success — for Kwanus Club, backed by the local office of New York Life, worked with the Anchorage Centennial Commission to sponsor Moose Goose rides. The locomotive was on loan from the West Coast Railroad Association in Vancouver, B.C., and operated through the end of September in 1967. And here's a proposal for the friendly folks who run the Alaska Railroad. Now that there's a fair-weather dollar train station at the airport — unfortunately used only for cruise ship passengers — why not bring back another Moose Goose that would



Tobin



make a couple of runs a day this summer from downtown to the airport? It was a winner 37 years ago. Why not now? Well, who knows. Maybe it's because steam locomotives are no longer environmentally correct. But wouldn't they be a good market for Melanistia Valley coal?

ON YOUR CALENDAR: The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce will be leading the community in a grand and glorious Military Appreciation Week, beginning Monday, June 7. The back-of-the-house event will come at the chamber's weekly luncheon meeting, which that day will be geared to telling all the men and women in uniform throughout that they are something special to everybody in Anchorage. The state's top military commander, Air Force Lt. Gen. Carol H. Chandler, will be the principal speaker at the lunch event. For this event, reservations — at \$30 a person or \$240 for a table of eight — must be made in advance. No tickets will be sold at the door. To grab a spot at the lunch, call the chamber at 272-2401.

SUNDAY SHORT TAKES: Wayne A. Stevens, who will take over as president and CEO of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce on July 1, has been the executive director of the Kodiak Chamber since 1985. He'll be moving to Juneau, the state chamber headquarters, to succeed Pamela LaBelle, who is retiring after 10 years in the post. Anchorage's Jon Kuntum is the new president elect.

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of Commonwealth North, now celebrating its 25th anniversary as a public-park agency organization. He succeeded Joe Grubbs, CEO of Chugach Electric, who has headed Commonwealth North for the last two years. The good news is that Brenda Wierich, wife of the former mayor, is on the mend after a fall down a ladder while touring the USS Alaska a few weeks ago. The bad news is that she's still sore from the bumps and bruises suffered in the mishap aboard the nuclear submarine in coastal waters off Bremerton, Wash.

DON'T KNOW HOW this slipped by, but just found out — by reading a March 8 issue of Sports Illustrated — that Anchorage's Tyson Langston played basketball this past season with a Turkish team, Etes Pinar. The season before, after leaving the National Basketball Association's Cleveland Cavaliers, the former East High School star took his pro career to Italy with Benetton Treviso.

The same issue, with a focus on Alaska, had a long piece about the Iditarod and included photos of six of what it called Alaska's all-time sports best. Langston, a two-time All-American at Duke, Carlos Boozer, who starred with Juneau-Douglas High, followed Langston to Duke, and now is one of the Cavaliers' starting leaders. Tommy Moe, Gardwood skier and three-time Olympian with two gold and silver medals, Hilary Lindh, a Juneau native who also is a three-time Olympic skier and a gold medal winner in the downhill at the 1997 world championships, Alaska dog musher Susan Butcher, a four-time Iditarod champion, and Scott Gomez of Anchorage, National Hockey League rookie of the year in 1999-2000, and twice a member of the New Jersey Devils Stanley Cup championship team.

SUNDAY PUNDAY: Pat and Mike were huddled over a couple of bins of Guinness at O'Connell's pub. Said Pat: "How's your brother doing since he fell into the cutting machine at the upholstery factory?" Ah, the man of ye to ask, replied Mike. "I'm happy to tell ya, he's fully recovered."

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Fiscal fix

ators fought a solution at every turn.

**Gordon Parker
Baton Rouge, LA**

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

GREEN GROUP BACKS AWAY FROM ...

Pogo demand

THE BATTLE of Pogo Mine ended quietly last week when Teck-Pogo Inc. and the Northern Alaska Environmental Center reached an agreement that allows the gold mine project to proceed.

The environmental group is withdrawing its appeal of a federal permit for the project. In turn Teck-Pogo has agreed to monitoring tests in a salmon-producing stream near the mine and additional oversight by a stakeholder watchdog group.

A Teck-Pogo spokesman said the salmon stream tests will cost about \$20,000 a year and any costs associated with the new watchdog panel will be rolled in with the company's already-scheduled monitoring program.

Arthur Hussey, executive director of the Environmental Center, said the compromise reached with Teck-Pogo did not achieve his group's original goals. His filing of a last-minute challenge to the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed permit threatened to eliminate 300 to 500 jobs for the Fairbanks area and postpone the mine project for a year or more.

The green group's objections were apparently based on the purist argument that — though government overseers seemed satisfied that any water released from the mine would be of drinking-water quality — treating the water constituted its conversion. Hussey said that meant technically the river would be used as "a toxic waste dump" despite the cleanliness of its waters.

THE AGREEMENT came after round-the-clock discussions involving state and federal officials and representatives of Teck-Pogo and the environmental group.

The Environmental Center's willingness to compromise and drop the appeal was motivated in considerable part by a storm of negative publicity and enormous pressure brought by state and federal officials, both professional and elected, and a broad cross-section of the business and civic communities.

Some of those unhappy about the group's move against the mine joined picket lines outside its office and left angry phone messages.

Pressure may also have come from the group's colleagues in the environmental movement, who said privately they thought the Environmental Center might have hurt its own credibility. They also appeared worried about potential backlash against other green groups.

The outcome of the issue looks good at this point. Teck-Pogo will be able to proceed and return the 200 workers it had laid off. Another 100 were kept on the job and will continue.

We question the Environmental Center's purist demands — arguing that drinking-quality water is not good enough — but an end to the crisis is good news.

At the apex of Big Red sits a huge grin

By PAUL JENKINS

With little warning, I blundered into The Great Dark, where motorcycling is divided into Harley Davidson and all other motorcycles, us and them, cubic inches and cubic centimeters, badasses and bandannas.

In one word, you ride from bar to bar. In the other, from restaurant to restaurant.

Where once I was pure (in a very, very limited sense, mind you) and rode only BMWs, where once in my unrefined view of things there was only German engineering, mechanical superiority and technological prowess, now there is more, much more, that must be added to the equation. There is cool. That's right. Cool. Incalculable. Immasurable. Undeniable.

For the first time, I'm astride 88 cubic inches of vibrating, rumbling, industrial-grade American iron. How could I have ignored the allure until now? Sure, stuff vibrates off

along the road. We saw lots of Harley parts laying along the highway last year on the way to Scurry, S.D., motorcycling's Mecca. So what? Just put them back on and keep moving.



Jenkins

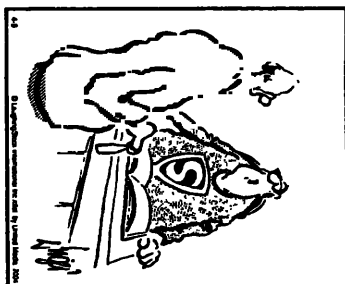
After driving the Harley dealer insane for about two weeks (What about this? What about that?) I wound up with a big, new, shiny, red Harley Roadking. All it needs is more chrome. And that little reflector gizmo that fell off and bounced down the Glenn Highway when the bike had 80 miles on the odometer. I still love it, so does the bank.

Don't get me wrong, the BMW is still my favorite. Hum. It can go bad places, at speed and with a certain cadence, that puts it well out of Big Red's league, especially in gravel and rocks and mud. It stays, but Big Red now is its stablemate with its own mission. Touring.

The idea of riding a Harley had been foreign (and, frankly, somewhat unsettling) until I realized I needed a bike that would take two riders. The Beemer can do the job, but it isn't comfortable for me. It came to down to a big BMW or a Honda Gold Wing. There are many others, every bit as good, but those were my choices.

The Big Beemer was way too tall for my unseasoned legs. Tall bikes and short legs are a constant source of problems. The guys I ride with never let you forget when you drop a bike, say, because you stepped in a huge hole as you tried to stop in a gravel pit and you couldn't get your foot down. Do I bring up their drops all the time? No, but I digress. The Gold Wing was the obvious choice. What a great bike. What's not to like? Then, almost as an afterthought, I dropped by the Harley dealer in Spearhead.

There was the UltraClassic with all the bells and whistles, stereo and intercom and the like. Ooooooo. There was the Classic that was almost as tricked out. Ooooooo. There was Big Red. Alibi. And then there was the big mistake. Want to take a Roadking for a ride? They asked. We have one right here. No, well, maybe, well, OK, I said. I think I'm still hot for the UltraClassic, but sure, why not?



"Got a room with a panoramic view of the city?"

ding) until I realized I needed a bike that would take two riders. The Beemer can do the job, but it isn't comfortable for me. It came to down to a big BMW or a Honda Gold Wing. There are many others, every bit as good, but those were my choices.

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They rolled it outside. It was very black, with the Phase One bit already installed to enhance air intake and exhaust. It rumbled, it purred, it exhaled cool. I climbed aboard and started laughing. I headed out, trying to get a feel for the controls, which are very, very foreign to Beemer riders.

At a stoplight, a grocery getter in front of me was loaded with Chinese husbands, honest, and they were all standing at the rear window, looking at me as if I were from outer space, or somewhere in Spearhead. When I gave the throttle a quick roll, making the pipes bark, they would bark. They would stop. I rolled the throttle. They barked. The lady driving the thing was mouthing things into the mirror and waving her hands. I gave her a couple of little throttle blips, too. Take that, baby. George Thoroughgood's "Bad to the Bone" was running through my mind. And the dogs went nuts.

When I returned the bike, I realized I'd been laughing for the entire ride. Not giggling. Laughing. A couple of kids in a pickup truck tried to cut the bike off at a light. A slight throttle tickle and it was sidos. With noise. And style. Big Red's brother was an eye-opening experience. Because of it, Big Red won a spot in my overcrowded garage.

One of my riding partners, well, just call him Crash, sweats. I'll soon be wearing Harley Davidson this and Harley Davidson that. Doo-dads. Leathers. Gloves. Key fobs. You name it. No, I tell him, that ain't gonna happen. In my heart, I'm still a Beemer guy. We wound up with a \$60 bid that for the next year, I'd be buying on Harley stuff.

I will say that I've suddenly had this urge to buy chrome stuff to add on to Big Red. Haven't a clue why. It must be a sickness, or something they put in the paint. When the dealer delivered the bike, a 300-page catalogue jammed full of "stuff" of every size and description was part of the deal. A year is a long time.

But for now, all I need is the Phase One bit so I can decide myself — and that damned red reflector.

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

BREAKING GROUND FOR ALEUTIAN ...

War memorial

ON FRIDAY afternoon officials from the city representatives of the Air Force, and a number of military veterans of wars gone by will gather at the south side of Merrill Field for a brief but very special ceremony.

They will be there to break ground for a major construction project to enlarge and enhance a memorial that honors 11th Air Force fliers who gave their lives during the battle in the Aleutian Islands in World War II. A modest memorial exists at the site now, dedicated two years ago on a rise that leads to the airport from the intersection of 15th Avenue and Airport Heights Road.

But it needs more to truly honor the sacrifices of those who died in the defense of Alaska 60 years ago. It needs further to give the monument a top spot among other community attractions — a site attractive to residents and visitors alike as a reminder of the heroism of thousands of young Americans of long ago. The driving spirit behind this project has come from members of the Edward J. Monaghan Chapter of the Air Force Association, local veterans and Air Force supporters who volunteered to raise \$60,000 to pay the costs. The actual expenses for the work that will begin Friday will be much more than that amount — but many local companies are making substantial in-kind donations in materials and labor to see the project through.

At the ground-breaking ceremony, scheduled at 1:30 p.m., Mayor Mark Begich and Air Force Lt. Gen. Carol H. Chandler, the top military commander in Alaska, will join in turning over the first dirt to formally begin the construction effort. The public is invited to a brief ceremony. Stop by on your way back to work after lunch. Your presence will be a way to help show the community's support for our military men and women of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Savage conduct

WHAT TRANSPIRED at the infamous Army detention center in Iraq was reprehensible, and obviously a terrible setback in our country's effort to demonstrate what democracy and freedom are all about. But the repulsive photos showing maltreatment of prisoners did not reflect savagery on the part of the U.S. Army guards. Treatment of the prisoners violated the rules of human decency, but it was not inhuman. The word savage is the only one to adequately describe the five men, their faces concealed behind black ski masks, who beheaded an American civilian, identified as Nick Berg of Philadelphia, and then held high his head in a video-taped example of a brutal execution. The video was aired on an Islamic militant Web site. The executors were said to be members of a group affiliated with al Qaeda.

Where is the wrath of the Muslim world over this despicable act? Where are the apologies? Where is any sense of humanity in this mad country of Iraq, where murder and maiming is condoned without shame?

Graduate owns this special moment

By ELISE PATKOTAK

I traveled to Barrow last week for high school graduation. My friend Greta was graduating and after sitting through innumerable grade school Christmas pageants in which she was only visible as the ponytail in the back row, I wanted to be front and center for her final bow in the Barrow school system.

It was a Barrow graduation which meant it went on for three hours in the high school gym with little kids running around, a constant flow of traffic in and out of the gym and a procession by the graduates to the rhythm of Eskimo drums while they passed under arches of basken.

To say this was different from my graduation back when we were eating diplomas on rocks with chisels is to grossly underestimate the situation. I grew up in a more formal time and went to parochial school. At graduation, we were still expected to be more seen than heard. And those of us allowed to speak knew without it ever being explicitly stated that the talk had to be adult, serious and formal.

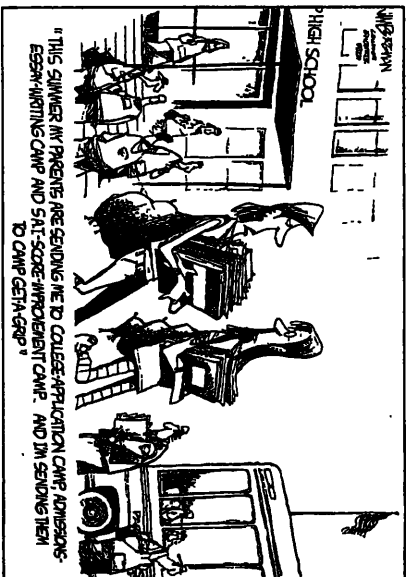


Patkotak

At this graduation, I watched as one student after another got up to speak and was once again amazed at how self-possessed and mature today's graduates are compared to my generation. These students got up and spoke with almost breezy self-assurance. They were funny, self-deprecating, relaxed and clearly having a great time.

If any student speaking at my graduation had tried that, we would have looked up from our notes on the podium to find a group of nuns and nuns rushing their stage with steam blowing out of their eye sockets while our parents tried to hurdle over them to get to us first — and they weren't doing that to protect us. They just have wanted to get in the first whack.

Part of the Barrow ceremony was a look back in pictures at each of the graduates. Each student picked up to three



"THIS SUMMER MY PARENTS ARE SENDING ME TO COLLEGE APPLICATION CAMP. AMESKAK-ESSEN-WITTING CAMP AND SAT SCORE IMPROVEMENT CAMP. AND IN SENDING THEM TO CAMP GET A-48?"

pictures from their past to be shown. Most elicited ohs and ahs from the audience as the graduate suddenly appeared on a large screen in dapples or a high chair with food smeared from one side of their face to the other. Young men who came in from whiling to attend their graduation were seen as young boys dressed to go out on the ice at a time when they were too young to go out without their mothers.

One of the graduating students had once been on my guardian ad litem casebook. She was one of the lucky ones. She'd found a new home with her siblings in a stable and loving family when her pictures came up, there was none of her as a baby or young girl. Her life in pictures didn't start till she was well into her teens.

This isn't unusual for children in state custody. Often their birth family is lost to them and with that loss goes the loss of their earliest history. And if they bounce through foster or group homes while in the system, little if any history follows them. Some programs that work with these kids try to create life books for them that they can take with them as they move around. But a life book just isn't the same as a family photo album. So many kids in state custody enter

the world at 18 with no real family history to ground them. Of course, these kids usually have such a jumbled history, strewn with relationship failures, family breakdown, substance abuse, violence and criminal neglect that it's a wonder they would ever want to remember their past.

Children raised in foster homes and group homes don't have photos of them opening presents under a Christmas tree while still in their Dr. Deaton's, their parents beaming in the background. They don't have pictures of them blowing out candles on a birthday cake surrounded by balloons and family. They have little to look at to tell them that at some point in their lives they were loved and cherished.

Amidst all the joy of that graduation ceremony, the greatest I could find was watching that adopted young lady walk up to the podium to receive her diploma. She may have little record of her past but she has the hope of love and joy in the future because now she has a real family.

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Parallel Logic*, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd, a writing/graphics company.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

PARK SERVICE SHOULDN'T INCREASE DENALI...

Lottery fees

THOSE WHO WANT to enter the annual lottery for a coveted permit to drive along the Denali Park road in mid-September now must pay \$10 just to enter the drawing. The \$10 levy is bad enough, but there is more. If you are lucky enough to actually win one of the prized 1,600 permits to drive the 90-mile strip of gravel through the heart of one of this nation's crown jewels, you will have to ante up an additional \$35, which includes a \$10 entrance fee.

Last year, the annual drive-in lottery, started in 1990 because an unmanageable number of motorists were allowing up for the annual drive, was free, this year, it is \$45. That is bothersome.

The National Park Service says the fees are necessary because of budgetary pressures and increased numbers of people applying for the lottery.

The Park Service says 18,000 people sought permits last year, and handling the flood of mail was expensive. It cost about \$90,000 to handle the mail and keep the park up and running for the annual event, the Park Service says. The match is simple: the new \$10 fee, if applications remain at the same level, will generate \$180,000. That doesn't count the additional \$35 in fees, which would generate, for 1,600 permits, another \$56,000.

While paying \$45 for a chance to drive the scenic Denali Park road does not seem too large a financial cross to bear for some of us, the \$10 application fee will be enough to discourage others. The less fortunate among us—who own the parks as much as the wealthy—will be denied a chance available to others. That simply is wrong. This country is about equal opportunities, and pricing permits out of reach for some citizens is not in the nation or Park Service's best interest.

THE NEW FEES, it seems to us, open the Park Service to the oft-heard criticism that it has an elitist bent. If you can pay, you can play; if you can't, stay away. At a time of shrinking budgets, when the nation's parks need all the friends they can muster, it seems a poor message.

The Park Service's apparent aim here is to maximize revenues while at the same time reducing the number of applicants and the attendant workload. Surely, there is another way, a better way.

Instead of opening and dealing with 18,000 applications in 18,000 envelopes and then drawing 1,600 winners, why not skip a step and save a wad of dough? Why not make a party of it and just draw 1,600 unopened envelopes containing applications from a huge barrel? Have preferred dates written on the outside. Why spend the time and money to open the rest? Notify the winners and that's that. Neat.

Clean. And less expensive by \$45 a head for the winners. Closing Denali to those who want to see its majesty but cannot afford the price tag simply is wrong. A better way must be found to accommodate us all.

Doubts were not actually his dog's

By TOM BRENNAN

Last week's column brought out bursts of anger from some of our liberal readers. We got a bunch of unpleasant e-mails and a few heated phone messages.

The liberal fury was prompted by concerns attributed to my Democrat dog about the presidential prospects of John Kerry. Some of the comments received here were downright venomous.

One said the column was silly, childish, made no real point and went nowhere. He also said I was a lousy writer. The only thing he missed was saying my mother wears army boots.

I got a huge kick out of the liberal rage. The main point of the column and its headline were that Kerry doesn't know well that the more you get to know him the less you like him. I said the dog was telling that the Democrats might decide to dump Kerry at their national convention in July and nominate somebody like Hillary Clinton.

What they didn't know was that the concerns about Kerry expressed here were not those of my dog (sauruses). They were worries mentioned over a period of weeks by a friend and old-time Democrat, a faithful member of that party.



And the items about Brennan's boorish behavior were paraphrased from a marvelous piece by Horace Carr, a prominent columnist for the Boston Herald, one of the major newspapers in Kerry-land.

I swear, that's the truth. Not one word of the Kerry comments came from either me or my dog. They originated with my friend the Democrat, whose name many would know so I won't mention it, or with a syndicated writer for a distinguished newspaper in Red Sox country.

One of our emailing liberals pointed out that I was inaccurate in referring to Kerry as a Boston Brahmin. That's an error many writers have made and it is



an error. I admit. I was thinking of the Massachusetts senator as a rich Boston man.

A Boston Brahmin is a member of the New England upper crust, the old and rich families that ruled Massachusetts and lots more for many years.

But Kerry didn't inherit his money; he married it. He was down to his last few million when he married Teresa, widow of Sen. John Heinz, a Pennsylvania Republican who was killed in a 1991 plane crash in his home state. Heinz was an heir to the ketchup and food fortune. Kerry married the widow Heinz and her \$600 million fortune in 1995.

I'm glad to set the record straight. The man didn't inherit his money and isn't from a wealthy family. A gold-digger, maybe. But a Brahmin, no. (And before the liberals get their knickers in a knot, I should say that the gold-digger line originated in Horace Carr's column too.)

One benefit of the liberal spleen was that I am happy to be able to give the Boston Herald columnist credit for his writing. It would have been awkward to have my dog use footnotes. He quotes

Geraldo Rivera sometimes and that's bad enough.

And not all the responses to the column came from furious letters. There were actually e-mails and phone calls from people who loved it—and some laughter on the liberals and green extremists.

As you can see from the words at the top of this page, our job is to be a conservative voice for Alaskans. We are the only news or opinion institution in the state that is so up-front about its political leanings.

And with that mission, indications of liberal or greenish disposition are signs of our success. I wouldn't want to discourage those folks from expressing their anger, but they should know that when their heated missives are received here, we are inclined to do high fives and about "Bingo."

We might actually do that if we weren't conservatives. Our celebrations tend therefore to be more restrained and refined. It's the right thing to do.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

HUNTING WOULD BE BETTER THAN ...

Moving moose

WE ARE LEFT to wonder what in the blue blazes has happened to Alaska when the best way that can be found to deal with Anchorage's nuisance moose is to drug them with a dangerous narcotic and cart them away.

Instead of opting for the inexpensive, logical and traditional method of reducing the number of problem moose in an area — dare we suggest hunting in these gun-free days? — the Legislature haggled over a measure that would allow authorized groups to drug and move some of our Billwinnies. All that, mind you, under management of the Fish and Game Department, which has a transplant policy, but no money.

It sounds good when you hear it, but there are problems. It would be dangerous, to the moose and those involved in the tranquilizing, and it may be prohibitively expensive.

Wildlife officials say they are doubtful such a program would be successful. Among other considerations, moose are difficult to move and must be transported in a fashion that allows the huge critters to lie sternal-down. And they can be very, very cantankerous, a half-ton or so of cantankerous

WHILE THE IDEA of hauling troublesome moose to areas of the state where they are not so plentiful must be appealing — especially to those sick of confronting moose here and those desperate for moose there — the stress of capture, transport and release likely would kill many of them. And there are questions about how many would survive in their new homes if they lived to get there.

The Anchorage Bowl is home to about 1,000 of the ungulates, each with the potential of becoming a very large problem to somebody. They have killed at least two Anchorage residents in past years and injured several others — some seriously.

For the most part they are controlled by the amount of browse available and being snatched by vehicles. Hunting or outright culling should be an obvious option because it makes more sense than freighting stressed moose to the locales, and is vastly more appealing than watching them starve or using Volvos and Seabos to curb their numbers. Removing them, indeed, may be an answer, but we are not sure it is the answer.

All in all, if animals are a problem they should be dealt with humanely and quickly. Drugging them, stressing them out of their minds, hauling them off — presumably by an aircraft of some sort — and depositing them in parts unknown does not seem to us a good way to deal with the problem.

While we are sure proponents of the plan have the best intentions, it seems an unnecessary risk for moose, and the people that would be involved, for the good it would do.

Instead, the best options seem to be a hunting season of some sort, culling problem moose as necessary or buying better car insurance.

If it were up to us, a hunting we would go

Prison scenes inflame Islamic jihad

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

On Sept. 11, 2001, America awoke to the ghastly, wondering: What is this about? We have come to agree on the obvious answers: religion, ideology, political power and territory. But there is one fundamental issue at stake that dates not speak its name. This war is also about — deeply about — sex.

For the jihadists, at stake in the war against the infidels is the control of women. Western freedom means the end of women's mastery by men, and the end of dictatorial clerical control over all aspects of sexuality — in dress, behavior, education, the arts.

Taliban rule in Afghanistan was the model of what the jihadists want to impose upon this world. The case they make against freedom is that, wherever it goes, especially the United States and Europe, it brings sexual license and corruption, decadence and depravity.

The appeal of this fear can be seen in the Arab world's closest encounter with modernity. Israel. Israeli women are by far the most liberated of any in that part of the world. For decades, the Arab press has responded with lurid stories of Israeli sexual corruption.

The most famous example occurred in the late 1990s, when Egyptian newspapers damned the cheering gun Israel was selling in Egypt. It was laced with sexual hormones that aroused insatiable lust in young Arab women. Palestinian officials later followed with charges that Israeli women were using the hormones to lure young Arab men into prostitution, and "completely destroying the genetic system of young boys" to boot.

Which is why the fortune pictures coming out of Abu Ghraib prison could not have hit a more neuragic point. We think of torture as the kind that Saddam practiced, pain, mutilation, maiming and ultimately death. We think of it as having a political purpose: intimidation, political control, confession and subjugation. What happened at Abu Ghraib was entirely different. It was gratuitous sexual abuse.

That is what made it, ironically and disastrously, a pictorial representation of precisely the lunatic fantasies that



the jihadists believe — and that cynical secular regimes such as Egypt and the Palestinian Authority peddle to pacify their populations and deflect their anger and frustrations. Through this lens, Abu Ghraib is an 'I told you so' played out in an Arab capital, recounted on film.

Jihadists, like all totalitarian, oppose many kinds of freedom. What makes them unique, however, is their particular hatred of freedom for women. They prize their traditional prerogatives that allow them to keep their women barefoot in the kitchen as illiterate economic and sexual slaves. For the men, that is a pretty good deal — one threatened by the West with its twin doctrines of equality and sexual liberation.

It is no accident that jihadists around the world are overwhelmingly male. It is very rare to find a female suicide bomber. And when you do, as with the young woman who blew herself up in Gaza, killing four others in January, it turns out that she herself was a victim of sexual subjugation — a wife accused of adultery, marked for death, who decided to die a martyr rather than a pariah. But she also must.

Which is what made one aspect of the Abu Ghraib horrors even more incendiary — the pictures of female US soldiers mocking, humiliating and dominating naked and abused Arab men. One could not have designed a more

symbolic representation of the Islamic war against where Western freedom ultimately leads than yesterday's Washington Post photo of a uniformed American woman holding a naked Arab man on a leash.

Let's be clear: The things we have learned so far about Abu Ghraib are not, by far, the worst atrocities committed in war. Indeed, they pale in comparison with what Arab insurgents have done to captured Westerners, and what Saddam Hussein did to his own people. The American offenders should surely be judged by our standards, not by others'. By our standards, these were egregious violations of human rights and human dignity. They must be punished seriously. They do not, however, reflect the ethos of the US military, which has performed with remarkable grace and courage in Iraq, or of US society.

The photographs suggest otherwise. Which is why the abuse at Abu Ghraib is so inflammatory and for us our cause, so damaging. It reminded the most deeply psychologically charged — and most deeply buried — aspect of the entire war on terrorism, exactly as Osama bin Laden would have scripted it.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His work is distributed by The Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2004 The Washington Post Co.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Monday, May 10, 2004 B-7

OFF AND RUNNING: FORGET . . .

The red lights

LET'S SEE. WASN'T it just a few weeks ago that we had all the whoop-de-do about the police cracking down on speeding drivers who run red lights? A lot of hoopla. A lot of TV time. Talking heads from the police department and the mayor's office. Boy howdy, we're going to get after those people.

Well, the campaign lasted about a week. Maybe 10 days. Seems like we saw pictures of people getting tickets. Warnings from the TV anchropeople. And then, silence. Worse, back to the old days. Have you seen any driver being stopped lately for running a red light? Bet you haven't. Have you seen any drivers running red lights? Bet you have. It happens all day, every day, at almost any intersection in town.

Any police around enforcing the law? Not so you'd notice — and the problem is getting worse. In fact, tickets issued for running red lights fell by half between 1999 and 2002, from 3,605 then compared to just 1,769 two years ago. Then they climbed somewhat to a jackduster 2,338 in 2003.

The lower ticket numbers are almost certainly not because Alaskans are becoming better drivers. One person in our office, during one brief drive in midtown one afternoon last week, saw seven vehicles rip through red lights. Seven. In less than an hour's time on short trips handling a few errands.

THE NEXT morning, on the way to work, the same person witnessed four more red-light-runners on Benson Boulevard. Two whipped through turns the other two simply plowed straight ahead well after the light had gone from yellow to red. Maybe it's a case where most of us don't drive on the same streets and pass through the same intersections where the police are still maintaining this much-acclaimed campaign. Maybe careless drivers really are being reined in by the score, and we simply haven't seen it happen.

But we doubt it. Not a day goes by, we're willing to wager, that every single motorist in town doesn't see one or more drivers of automobiles, pickups, vans or SUVs putting the pedal to the metal to get through a light that has just changed to red. And get away with it.

Campaign or no campaign. Actually, we're sorry to note, no campaign.

Lots of headlines and TV time. Lots of fluff. Lots of huffing and puffing.

But results? Mostly, said to say, zip. Why is it that the rest of us apparently are able to see what the police evidently can't see? Those who run red lights are dangerous drivers. Deadly dangerous drivers. They need to be taught a serious lesson — big, big fines, and enough driving points to put their licenses in jeopardy.

But that will only happen if the police actually get this campaign back in gear. Now. Today. And every day still to come.

Military draft conceals true labor cost

By **WALTER E. WILLIAMS**

Last year, Sen. Fritz Hollings, D-S.C., and Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., introduced bills calling for reinstatement of the military draft.

A far more descriptive term for the military draft is government confiscation of labor services, but keeping with the spirit of euphemistic obfuscation, I'll stick to the term draft. Let's first ask why a draft would be needed in the first place.

Rest assured that if the military offered a compensation package of, say, \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year, it could get all the soldiers it wanted. Thus, lesson No. 1 is that whenever there's a draft, you know that the wage is too low to get a sufficient number of people to voluntarily supply their labor services.

Sen. Hollings said, "One way to avoid a lot more wars is to institute the draft." That's a statement that reflects gross economic ignorance. In terms of incentives, it produces the opposite effect. Why? The draft is used because the wage the military offers isn't high enough to get what's deemed as a sufficient number of people to volunteer.

Here's my no-brainer question. Under which scenario is war cheaper for the Defense Department — the volunteer army or the draft? Obviously, it's the draft, since the Defense Department doesn't have to pay the higher wages to get young people to sign up voluntarily.

Since the Defense Department has a smaller manpower expense, the draft disguises the true cost of war, and one would expect more, not less, military adventurism. Waging war requires much more than soldiers. You need tanks, bombs, bullets and aircraft. Have you heard a call to draft \$15 million F-15 fighter jets or \$4.3 million M1 Abrams Main Battle Tanks? I haven't.

The reason is that the government pays the kind of prices whereby producers voluntarily supply these products. Being employed producing the hardware for the defense of our country need not be voluntary. The government could send us draft notices ordering us to report for work at General Dynamics' Texas track-vehicle facility at \$400 a month. If the government did this, would you call it a draft or slave labor?

Not to worry, the Defense Department offers attractive contracts to firms like McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics, and they in turn offer attractive wages to employees, and thus, vol-



Of course, if the Pentagon were willing to pay McDonnell Douglas only \$5 million for an F-15 and General Dynamics only \$1 million for a tank, it would have to draft (read: confiscate) jets and tanks. Does one have a duty to defend his country? I say yes.

In order to field one soldier, I'm guessing you need hundreds of civilian workers to supply him with boots, food, bullets, tanks, jets, medical equipment, and thousands of other items needed in war in addition to soldiers. Thus, if you're engaged in producing these items, you are participating in the defense of your country.

Being employed producing the hardware for the defense of our country need not be voluntary. The government could send us draft notices ordering us to report for work at General Dynamics' Texas track-vehicle facility at \$400 a month. If the government did this, would you call it a draft or slave labor?

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Publisher

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Senior editor

War memorial

The memorial opened to the public last week and was received by veterans of the big war as a welcome tribute to their long-ago sacrifices for their nation and their world.

Among those touring the 74-acre site was Alaska's senior senator, who was a pilot in the China-Burma-India theater during the war and

What few Alaskans knew about at the time it happened was that Stevens was decisive in defeating opposition to the memorial and pushed through legislation that made it possible

The opposition complained that the National Park Service violated federal laws and regulations by pushing the project through without doing environmental impact studies. Others complained about the design. Numerous lawsuits were filed to block the project, but none were successful. A total of 22 public hearings were held, many featuring angry urinals.

"We want to be there when this memorial is opened," Stevens said then. And — when the day finally came — he was

in the home of Jack Muller. The Anchorage lawyer may have been the last proud fellow in the Sullivan Arena last Sunday as the University of Alaska Anchorage handed out diplomas to its

Alaska Miners Association says it's a fact that Canada is now the third-largest dia-

The Anchor
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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS



world's second-largest oil consumer. China — where there now are 80 million motorcycles and 7 million automobiles. The newly powered Chinese are pumping more than 6 million barrels of gasoline daily from their favorite corner gas stations. China took over second place in oil consumption from Japan, which dropped to third in this rubing of gas-guzzling nations. The US is first, of course — where gasoline demands are expected to soar above the 9 million barrels a day by year-end. And boy, are they ANNIHILATING IT.

ON THE LOCAL AIRS from the Executive Theatre Company's production of Arthur Chalkley's "The Sea Gull" which opened Friday evening at Ctryw, is the 66th production staged by this remarkable group headed by artistic director Larry Harper. UAA professor David Ragooske directed the production, with a cast including Jerry and Patricia, a new actress on the local scene, Susan Shaw, Tamar Sha and Fred Baker. Susan, a new actress on the local scene, studied at the Moscow Art Theatre School, the son of Alexander Tr. Randozov, director Mary Fitzgerald, is visiting here from California, where he is making his way in Hollywood. He's now endeavoring to get the ETC. He had roles previously in "David Mamet's 'American Buffalo'" and "Harold Pinter's 'Moonlight'."

HOW TIME FLIES: It passes with no particular notice, but last Sunday was the 20th anniversary of the meeting between President Ronald Rea-

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BILL J. ELLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

CAMPAIGN AGAINST BEN STEVENS BY ...

Activist left

A N ANCHORAGE group led by a long-time Democrat Party activist is conducting an attack-ad campaign against Sen. Ben Stevens.

Lawyer Meg Simonian and a group calling itself "Anchorage Friends of Local Control" are infatuated because Stevens wants to roll back last year's initiative to reduce the required vote total to win the mayor's job from 50 percent, plus one, to 45 percent.

Simonian and her group are claiming noble reasons for their attack and say Stevens shouldn't mess with Anchorage election laws because "the people have spoken." But the people spoke just a few years ago when they raised the minimum winning vote to 50 percent, plus one.

The 2003 effort to put onto the ballot a proposition to roll back the 50 percent, plus one, rule to 45 percent was bankrolled by supporters of Mayor Mark Begich and engineered by his pals on the Assembly. It was peddled to voters as a way to avoid paying runoff costs in mayoral and other municipal elections. And, oh, by the way, it would take effect in that election, a very unusual move.

The lower bar made it possible for the liberal Begich to win in a largely conservative city, perhaps helped by the fact that Anchorage elections are at least nominally non-partisan. And as it turned out, former mayor Rock Mystrom jumped into the race and tried to unseat incumbent Mayor George Wieruch, throwing the advantage to Begich.

IN THE END, Begich won with just 45.03 percent of the vote, just 17 votes more than the minimum. The total for the two conservative candidates was 52.84 percent of the vote. Under the system in effect before Election Day, the race would have gone to a runoff and Wieruch, the leading conservative vote-getter, would almost certainly have won re-election.

But Stevens believes, correctly, that the main executive in Anchorage should be elected by a majority of voters, not 45 percent. After all, the mayor represents all of Anchorage. And since only 33.2 percent of the 192,333 eligible voters turned out to cast their ballots, the numbers game allowed Begich to take the mayor's office with support from only 14.9 percent of the electorate.

Stevens has drawn fire from the left for his position and for his effort to change the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions panel to allow state lawmakers more input on transportation and road decisions.

Simonian is a lawyer who is very active in Democratic Party politics, a contributor to former gubernatorial hopeful Fran Ulmer and the Alaska Conservation Voters and a member of Mayor Mark Begich's Planning and Zoning Commission. She also worked on Begich's first mayoral election campaign.

Though Begich denies involvement, the anti-Stevens campaign appears to be part of an ongoing feud between the mayor and Stevens.

Metropolis and moose in conflict

By ROD ARNO

Wildlife issues are big news in Alaska. It's been that way, no doubt, since the first people moved into Alaska over 10,000 years ago. Fish and wildlife resources have always been Alaska's biggest attraction.

It's not surprising that the moose mover bill, SB 329, is causing a media stir. The moose mover legislation is prime for attacks from the "anti-wildlife management crowd" and they're out to disrupt public support for its passage.

The founder of the Alaska Moose Federation, Gary Olson, came up with an idea for decreasing accidents caused when cars and trucks collide with moose. Olson reasoned that relocating moose away from heavy urban traffic to areas where the moose population was below the amount necessary for subsistence use would benefit the majority of Alaskans. Car insurance companies and public safety officials all agree fewer moose in high density urban areas would save both lives and money.

In January of this year, Olson wrote deputy commissioner Wayne Regelin of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game asking for help on how to reduce the number of moose being killed by cars and trucks. Regelin informed Olson of the department's wildlife transplant policy developed by staff in the Division of Wildlife Conservation in 1956. The wildlife transplant policy is now a Board of Game adopted regulation.

Regelin went on to state, "However, I am not aware of any efforts where moose have been transplanted to reduce mortality caused by motor vehicles or trucks." Regelin went on to say that the high cost of funding moose transplant programs made them impractical within the limits of the Fish and Game budget.

With this input from Fish and Game, Olson turned to Sen. Con Blundie to introduce SB 329 which, when passed into law, would allow the Alaska Moose Federation to submit a moose transplant proposal based on public safety concerns. SB 329 also states that "the commissioner shall seek to relocate moose at the least cost to the state," meaning funding sources other than from Fish and Game's funds must be found.



The Alaska Moose Federation is ready to go out and raise the needed funds. If they can't, no nuisance moose transplant will survive the public's and department's transplant evaluation criteria.

All wildlife transplant proposals require four steps: a scoping report, a feasibility assessment (including biological and social risk analysis), public and Fish and Game review, and a formal Fish and Game transplant plan. Nothing in the moose mover bill changes any of these procedures.

The anti-game management crowd are blowing smoke when they complain about unqualified individuals climbing over your back fence during moose and hunting them off to the Bush.

What is the Defenders of Wildlife's problem with a law allowing moose transplants for public safety reasons? If the Defenders of Wildlife object to a moose being moved from an area of high human density to a remote location they have every opportunity of voicing their concern during the public review of the transplant feasibility assessment.

If the majority of Alaskans agree it's better to have a moose wrapped around a car hood than being relocated away from urban areas, then no nuisance moose will be moved.

The Defenders of Wildlife want to do away with managing moose populations

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

NATION'S PAIN WOULD BE EASIER WITH ...

ANWR open

THE PRICE of crude oil is nearing \$40 a barrel and Americans are feeling the pinch.

The soaring cost of crude is helping Alaska bridge its fiscal gap with swelling tax revenues and royalties from North Slope oil. But the nation faces severe economic hardship from the high cost of gasoline prices and many other fuels, commodities and merchandise.

And the pundits are musing possible solutions. They point out that opening the coastal plan of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling would not solve the immediate problem.

ANWR could potentially provide a million barrels a day of crude oil, doubling the throughput of the trans-Alaska pipeline. But developing an oil field is a years-long process and requires large investments with long lead times.

ANWR would fill only about 5 percent of the nation's daily crude consumption, but 5 percent is not an insignificant amount. Guess how much OPEC cut its area-wide production in April and cranked up the world's economic pain by a significant factor?

Those who send OPEC's April cutback was 980,000 barrels per day should stand and wave their gasoline credit cards. That's less than the projected daily output of the ANWR coastal plan.

And to the pundits who note that ANWR would take years to develop, we say: If Bill Clinton hadn't caved in to green hysterics in 1995 and vetoed legislation opening ANWR then, the coastal plan could be producing 1 million barrels a day right now.

Stevens power

WE GOOFED in an editorial published last Saturday about the attempt by Thuy Knowles to distance himself from John Kerry.

The editorial noted that Knowles will have no effect on John Kerry by telling Kerry that he is "just wrong" in opposing oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

That point was quite correct, but we erred in saying that Republican Sen. Ted Stevens is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. He chairs the more powerful Appropriations Committee. And under the Senate's committee term limits, Stevens' chairmanship of Appropriations ends this year no matter which party is in power. He will remain on the committee as a senior and influential member.

Given the power of Stevens' seniority, his past track record and his cordial relations with colleagues in both major parties, Alaskans have no reason to worry about a future without him as Appropriations chair. Ted Stevens, we're sure, will keep representing Alaska's interests with great vigor and will be bringing federal dollars home for projects needed here.

Doing nothing risks losing everything

By PAUL JENKINS

At some point soon, folks rightly are going to get upset off about the sham-rags in the state Senate, where Democrats diligently are working to ensure Alaskans are denied a chance to vote on the percent of market value approach to managing the Permanent Fund.

Why? It is impossible to fathom, on any level. Surely they cannot believe that a do-nothing approach to the state's chronic fiscal gap or taxing everything that is not tied down are wise courses. Their rhetoric about being the "Divided Democrats" who are out to save Alaskans' annual free money, no matter what, is more than a little shopworn, and that "no matter what" business leaves rational people a little nervous.

Are they willing to "surrender" dividends, but destroy the state's credit rating and plunge it into fiscal chaos? I don't get it. What good is a dividend if you lose your job and house?



Jenkins

The reality is this: The state, by its constitution, cannot run a deficit and it has not in the past because insinuations of cash from the Constitutional Budget Reserve are plugged in to the annual gap.

But the gap could deplete the fund and then what? While there is no real need for panic, time clearly is running out for a solution.

Voters, the people who will feel the sting of a do-nothing approach, should be given a chance to vote on the POMV and a spending cap. What's to lose?

If they give them a thumbs-down, the Legislature and the governor will have their marching orders and all the predictions, projections and prognostications finally will be over. It will be time to slash and tax on a draconian scale likely to trigger a monster recession that will hammer real estate prices and cut or cut them their jobs and homes what it needs from the fund's earnings to close the gap. It's never been done and has been viewed as political suicide by voters, while the Permanent Fund has \$28 billion growing in the bank.

"Here, take this, but make sure you get home in 90 seconds."



The cartoon is by Paul Jenkins.

he will not let the amount of money in Constitutional Budget Reserve, the fund for more than a decade dip below \$1 billion. It now stands at about \$2 billion.

This year the budget gap, because of soaring oil prices, is expected to be somewhere between \$60 million and \$80 million. But in fiscal year 2006, figuring oil at \$25 to a barrel, the shortfall could be in the neighborhood of \$972 million. That means very, very bad news may be just around the corner — and Democrats are busy trying to convince you they are working to save a few hundred dollars of your dividends. It won't help much.

If Democrats are calculating some grand strategy to finally get an income tax or one that will leave Republicans with egg on their face and them in the cabinet's seat, they should remember Alaskans in general, excluding some I won't name, are not stupid.

If POMV fails and lawmakers refuse to tap earnings, average Alaskans long will remember who handed them a pay cut or cut them their jobs and homes economy in the tank, destroying property values, while the Permanent Fund has \$28 billion growing in the bank.

The Democrats' record on putting the POMV and the spending cap up for a vote of the people is pretty clear. The House — with every Democrat but one implacably voting no — asked out the required two-thirds vote for proposed constitutional amendments that would allow voters their say on a spending limit and a "pure" POMV plan with no strings attached.

In my view that is the best approach. The House version allows minorities to be carried out by statute. It was a major first step toward fiscal health for the state.

In the Senate, the sledding is tougher. Kerry on a Senate version of a spending cap, which needed a two-thirds vote, failed when all eight Democrats voted no in lockstep. Why is a spending cap important? Some senators want reassurance that the POMV is not a license to spend money. They insist a cap be in place before they will even consider a POMV. Deny a vote on the spending cap, as Democrats have done, and, well, you can head off a Senate vote on any form of a POMV. To further assure no vote, the Democrats say they will support Markovitch's fiscal plan, but only if dividends are protected in the constitution — and Republicans long have opposed that.

When you stand back and see what is at stake in the next few years, you have to shudder. We can either have a POMV that protects the Permanent Fund, virtually guarantees dividends of \$1,000 or more in perpetuity and provides money for government operations — which the fund was set up to do — or we can sit on our thumbs and anger in. Those are the options.

Politics by its very nature is partisan, but what we seem to have nowadays is destructive in that it seeks gain rather than public good with the state's best interests often lost in the fracas. The best interest in this case requires a vote of the people on issues that might seriously affect their lives and their futures.

Put politics aside. Let them speak. Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Thursday, May 6, 2004 B-7

LET PUBLIC DECIDE ON...

Fiscal fix

THOUGH ALASKA'S legislative session is going down to the wire, Gov. Frank Murkowski is plugging hard to fix Alaska's fiscal mess this year.

Murkowski pleaded his case to the Senate this week and urged the few remaining holdouts there to put a solution before the voters at the general election in November.

The governor warned that the gap between revenues and expenses in fiscal year 2006 is projected to be \$972 million, which would drop the Constitutional Budget Reserve to a dangerously low \$876 million. He said failure to address the problem now could jeopardize the state's credit rating and risk an economic disaster.

Murkowski noted that revenue-generating economic growth is on the horizon. But an interim solution to the dollar gap is essential, a solution that must include a portion of Permanent Fund earnings.

Senate discussion continues on what such a measure might contain, but its core would be converting the method of calculating Permanent Fund earnings to a percentage of the fund's overall market value. Its shorthand acronym is POMV.

Pending versions of POMV legislation would allow the state to use a portion of fund earnings for state expenses. Dividends would also be paid from those earnings and Alaska would at last use the fund for its original purpose.

INITIALLY THE dividends would be higher than they will be under the existing system. That is because the present formula is tied to the performance of investments over the last five years, those years include several in which the market's economy sank and the value of fund holdings sagged with it.

But a POMV system would calculate earnings at 5 percent of the total value of the fund, thereby cushioning the account from short-term swings in the national economy.

Some legislators worry that putting a fiscal fix before the voters this year could risk its defeat and complicate the problem of resolving the state's cash shortfall. But opinion polls show awareness of the fiscal mess is high and the voters seem ready to deal with the situation themselves.

If the voters kill the POMV idea, that would complicate the job of the Permanent Fund directors. Each year they will be forced to sell or cash in investments in order to put dollars into the earnings account, just as they do now. That's not ideal, but the directors have done it for years and presumably can continue doing it.

The Legislature would be back where it is now, with the ability to draw on fund earnings for state expenses as well as for dividends. Exercising that option is considered politically dangerous. But dipping into earnings is most likely in a time of financial crisis, when there would be no easy choice.

It looks from here like the most prudent approach for the Legislature would be to head off such a crisis and put the issue before the voters this year.

Families of addicts suffer in silence

By ELISE PATKOTAK

Remember that picture of Nick Nolte taken a couple of years ago after what can only have been a six-month, non-stop bender? Remember any number of pictures of Courteney Love or Robert Downey Jr.?

Now think about Rush Lambaugh. Have you ever seen a picture of him where he looked anything but well-put-together and sober? And yet he had a major drug problem.

These thoughts run through my mind because I recently had surgery that necessitated a few days of drugs for the pain following it. I don't do well on prescription pain meds.

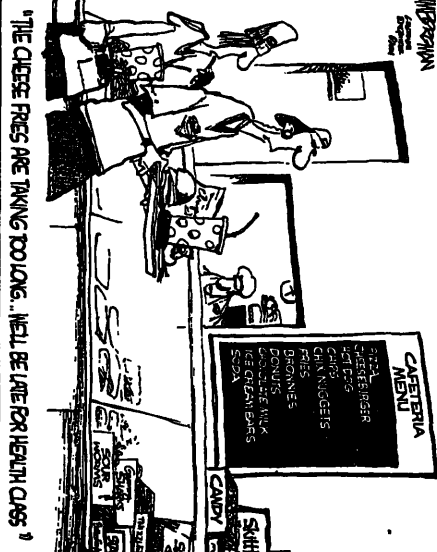
So I spent the days after surgery sitting around letting the drip pool on my shirt while watching TV. Land and wanted why people didn't name their sons Beaver anymore. After two days of pain pills, I needed one day of just sitting and letting my body and brain get back in sync before I could even conceive of driving a car—or my blues for that matter.

Thus is why I am always amazed when someone like Rush Lambaugh admits to a major addiction. I don't understand how he functioned on a day-to-day basis while being so addicted.



Addicts who hang around on street corners shaking and looking for their next fix—I can understand them because I can understand the power of the addiction to overwhelm all other necessities in life, like food, shelter and a modicum of human dignity. But Rush Lambaugh continued to function successfully at a high level while directly in the public eye.

There is no doubt in my mind that if I were to become addicted to these pain pills, I would be the street variety addict while using them. Yet I've worked in a field that deals with people with alcohol and drug addictions and I know that many of them are, like Rush Lambaugh, functional addicts.



Now to terms that may be a contradiction in itself. And if I really think about it, no addict is actually functional in the truest sense of the word since his world revolves about making it to the next drink or the next hit. But some people are able to keep a job, maintain a family and lead a life that looks pretty normal from the outside.

Alcoholics often can't do this as successfully as drug addicts because liquor makes you breath smell and inevitably someone will notice that the morning after odor is always on your breath and remains there all day, every day. Drug addiction is often not as visible unless the addicts are snorting cocaine or crystal meth and leaving telltale white mugs around their nostrils.

People who can make it through the day without having their addiction become detected, who can hold on to the semblance of a normal life, are often the hardest to reach. I can't help but wonder if Rush Lambaugh wouldn't fall be using if a police investigation didn't precipitate his disclosure of the addiction. Hence the rub in all this: The families of functional addicts suffer. They

A hidden addiction is still an addiction, and it's a destructive force as silently insidious as any ravaging drunk loudly tearing his house apart while in the middle of a month-long spree. Unfortunately, like a silent scream, it often goes undetected all the damage done is too great to repair.

Helping those families is an almost impossible task. And yet the damage done to each member will still affect our society for generations to come.

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Paradise Lost*, a memoirs book back at her 23 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Prescience Corp LLC, a writing/graphics company.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

SEPARATE EVALUATION

Overhaul

My dog is never going to rescue little Timmy from the mountain lion. He has watched too many exposés and thinks Timmy is not a boy but a very short man with a day-old beard and cigarette breath.

Jack might drag the mailman from in front of a speeding train, but only because the mailman gives him cookies. I don't think he would pull me off the tracks unless I was delaying the train.

Such cynicism is hard to take. The other day, when the earth shook, my wife asked indignantly, "Where is that dog? Animals are supposed to detect earthquakes before they happen and warn their owners."

He detected the quake," I told my

As I've mentioned, the dog is a Democrat and right now he is worrying about this year's national election. He is convinced that John Kerry has wrapped himself in the flag once too often and may have run out of stars, stripes and stripes.

on the more-heroic-than-thou thing.

Among other issues, he says, Kerry tells a different story every time the question comes up about his medals. Kerry's hometown newspaper, *The Boston Globe*, has interviewed the senator many times through the years and

Each story has been incompatible with the other.

The Anchor

• e-mail: Arnt@wiley.com

By TOM BRENNAN

OK OK I AM
EXPERIMENTED
WITH ROLLING
AN SUV -

against the Vietnam War after he served in it. The issue is whether he is a man who can be trusted, a man who tells the

As a Democrat, my dog believes that the Republicans are the ones raising the question about Kerry's medals, not the news media. He thinks the Republicans put them up to it. How he can believe that when the media are predominantly liberal and Democrat is beyond me, but I am angry about the things he said in 1971, the lies and distortions about so-called atrocities those in the military were committing in the war zone.

some things we dog owners are just supposed to take on faith.

cause he is such a confident person and often asks haughtily "Do you know who I am?" Yet Kerry portrays himself as the little guy's candidate, just an average Joe with your worries always on his mind.

Somehow that's not very credible coming from a Boston Brahmin with \$400 million in his wife's bank, a buldzer at his side, at least four homes in various places ranging in value from

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

DEMOCRATS PLAY ...

POMV games

DEMOCRATS IN JUNEAU are working hard to prevent Alaska from voting on a proposed constitutional amendment that would adopt a percent of market value apportionment to manage the state's mammoth Permanent Fund.

Until this week, Democrats tried to block a constitutional spending limit, seen as key to winning Senate approval for putting the POMV question on the ballot. They have not offered an alternative.

Now they have opened another front in their political war. Knowing full well that Republicans cannot, and will not, go along, Democrats promise they will support Gov. Frank Murkowski's fiscal plan if dividends are guaranteed in the state constitution. A crow would have a better chance of jumping over the moon. There's was, at its best, an empty promise. But it has been this way from Day One.

The House — with every Democrat but one voting "no" — last month squeaked through a constitutional spending limit for voter approval. With that in place, it adopted the POMV fund management approach. It did not ensure dividends in the proposed constitutional amendment, and addressed by law the split between POMV money used for state government and dividends.

It was a clean, unencumbered approach that would not hogtie future legislatures.

THE LIMIT and POMV now await Senate approval. With Democrats as much as promising the measures will fail, they face a tough fight. Democrats in the Senate managed to sink that chamber's version of a spending limit earlier in the session.

We are left to wonder as the battle shapes up. What is not to like about the proposed spending limit? Why not adopt a very necessary POMV? Why would this Legislature want to handcuff future lawmakers by enshrining in the constitution that Alaskans must be given free money first and foremost? Why won't Democrats let the people vote on the issues and have their say?

The House spending cap would hold government spending increases to about 2.5 percent in the next four years. That would be tied to the rate of inflation and population increases. It exempts, among other things, bonds, appropriations to the Permanent Fund, dividends or money needed to deal with a natural disaster. To top it off, if the spending limit is not working it could sunset at the end of fiscal 2009.

The POMV? It is vitally necessary to the state's fiscal health. As for restricting future legislatures, it's a lousy idea. Surely it cannot be that Democrats want to silence voters on major policy questions. We cannot bring ourselves to believe Senate Democrats would actively wage a two-front war against Alaska's best interests as part of some byzantine scheme aimed at winning political advantage.

They have trusted Alaskans before, why exclude them now?

Anti-Semitism now runs rampant

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMER

Anti-Semitism, once just a European disease, has gone global.

The outgoing prime minister of Malaysia gets a standing ovation from leaders of 57 Islamic countries when he calls upon them to rise up against the Jewish conspiracy to control the world. The French ambassador to London tells dinner party guests that Israel is a "despicable little country." Why should the world be in danger of World War III because of those people?

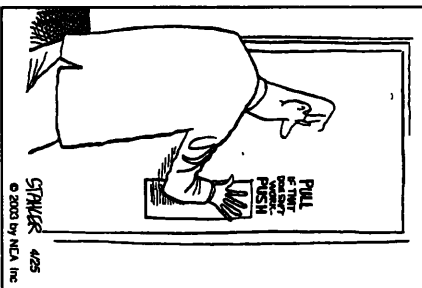
Ah, those people. Kofi Annan's personal representative in Iraq now singles out the policies of the world's one Jewish state — and only democratic state in the Middle East — as "the great poison in the region." The Egyptian government daily Al-Gumhurya is less diplomatic, explaining in an article by its deputy editor that "it is the Jews, with their hidden, filthy hands, who are behind all troubles, disasters and catastrophes in the world," including, of course, the attacks of Sept. 11 and the Madrid bombings.

It is in this kind of atmosphere that Israel gets unilaterally withdrawn from Gaza — uprooting 7,000 Jews, turning over to the Palestinians 21 settlements with their extensive infrastructure intact, and creating the first independent Palestinian territory in history — and is almost universally attacked.

Moreover, and much overlooked, Israel will also eradicate four small West Bank settlements, which creates extensive Palestinian territorial contiguity throughout the northern half of the West Bank.

The Arabs have variously denounced this as Israeli unilateralism, a departure from the road map, and a ruse and a ploy. The seven Europeans have duly followed suit. And when Tony Blair defied the mob by expressing support for the plan, he was rewarded with a letter from 62 Arabist ex-diplomats denouncing him.

This Nuremberg atmosphere has reached the point where, if Israel were to announce today that it intends to live for at least another year, the U.N. Security Council would convene to discuss a resolution denouncing Israeli aggression and unilateralism, and the United States would have to veto it. Only Britain would have the decency to abstain.



PULL THE STRING
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It gets worse. The Bush administration has been attacked not just for supporting the Gaza plan but for bolstering Israel in this risky endeavor with two assurances: first, that the Palestinian refugees are to be repatriated not to Israel but to Palestine, and second, Israel should not be required to return to its 1967 borders. Balghithat editorial opinion has denounced this as Bush's upstaging 30 years of American diplomacy.

Utter rubbish. Rejecting the so-called right of return is nothing more than opposing any final settlement that results in flooding Israel with hostile Palestinians and thus eradicating the only Jewish state on the planet. This is radical. This is something that Washington should refuse to say.

What is new here? Four years ago, at Camp David, this was a central element of the Clinton plan. As was the notion of Israeli's returning a small percentage of West Bank land on which tens of thousands of Jews live.

Moreover, the notion that Israel will not be forced to return to the 1967 armistice lines goes back 37 years — to 1967 itself. The Johnson administration was instrumental in making sure that

the governing document for a Middle East settlement — Security Council Resolution 242 — called for Israel withdrawal to "secure and recognized boundaries," not "previous boundaries." And it called for Israel to withdraw "from territories occupied" in the 1967 war — not "from the territories occupied," as had been demanded by the Arab states, and not from "all territories occupied" as had been demanded by the Soviet Union.

Arthur Goldberg (U.S. ambassador to the United Nations), Lord Carrington (British ambassador to the U.N.) and Eugene Rosow (U.S. undersecretary of state) had negotiated this language with extreme care. They spent the subsequent decades explaining over and over again that the central U.N. resolution on the conflict did not require Israel to withdraw to the 1967 lines.

Confronted with these facts, the cartoon says "Well, maybe this is right, but Bush should not have said this in the absence of negotiations. Good grief! This was offered to the Palestinians in negotiations — in July 2000 at Camp David — with even more generous Israeli concessions. Yasser Arafat said no and then launched a bloody terrorist war that has killed almost a thousand Jews and maimed thousands of others.

The fact is that there are no negotiations because under the road map — adopted even by the United Nations — there can be no negotiations until the Palestinians end the terror and dismantle the terror apparatus.

To argue that neither Israel nor the United States can act in the absence of negotiations is to give the Palestinians, by continuing the terror, a veto over any constructive actions by the United States or Israel — whether disengaging from Gaza, uprooting settlements or establishing conditions for a final peace settlement that would ensure the survival of a Jewish state.

This is an argument of singular absurdity. And a prescription for perpetual violence and perpetual stalemate.

Charles Krauthamer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Monday, May 3, 2004 **B-5**

HOW TO DECIDE ON...

Career choice

WHAT ARE young people to do these days in deciding on careers? That has always been a problem, but with many good-paying technical jobs being moved to places like India and China, such decisions have become even dicier.

There are no sure things. The good news, according to the Wall Street Journal, is that the United States "isn't going to be run out of jobs, even though history shows that it's impossible to predict what new jobs will replace those that are destroyed" by technological progress or changing world economics.

The bad news, says the Journal, is that "Outsourcing overseas and technology could widen the gap between the wages of well-paying brainpower jobs and poorly paid hands-on jobs." That is the most troublesome of the Journal's conclusions, since economic division could result in social division.

One obvious answer to young Alaskans wanting to avoid winding up on the bottom of the heap is to get as much education as possible. Employers pay a substantial premium for workers with four-year college degrees over those with high school diplomas — and that premium has been climbing steadily for the last 20 years.

THOUGH THE villain of the day is foreign competition and job outsourcing, there is always something. During the days when Lyndon Johnson was in the White House, the prognosticators warned that automation would eliminate many of the jobs on which the nation's economy was based.

But in the years since then, the economy has added 72 million jobs, an increase of 125 percent. Automation did eliminate many traditional jobs, but in doing so it created millions more.

In 1988, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted that the number of gas-station attendants would increase by more than 300,000 in the following 12 years. But the experts failed to predict that most gas stations would go to self-service and the number of station attendants in 2000 would be only 140,000 altogether.

Some might suggest that young people should learn jobs that can't be shipped abroad — like hairstyling, since customers can't send their heads overseas — but what happens if developing technology allows men and women to style their own hair?

The key to success will almost certainly be — as it has been for generations — to get as much education as possible, to be flexible, able and willing to learn new skills and to put one's own special talents into play whenever possible.

After that, only hard work and good luck can make a difference.

College can't fix poor preparation

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Drs. Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom's new book, "No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning," shows that the government education system receives nothing to write home about, but for blacks, it's no less than a disgraceful disaster.

According to National Assessment of Educational Progress findings, only in writing do less than 40 percent of black high school students test "below basic." NAEP defines below basic as being unable to demonstrate even "partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work" at their grade. In math, 70 percent and, in science, 75 percent of black students score below basic.

Black high school graduates perform a little worse than white eighth-graders in both reading and U.S. history, and a lot worse in math and geography. The Thernstroms report, "In math and geography, indeed, they know no more than whites in the seventh grade."

Finally, the Thernstroms conclude, "The employer hiring the typical black high school graduate for the college that admits the average black student is, in effect, choosing a Williams youngster who has made it only through the eighth grade."



University of Dayton Law School professor Vernellia R. Randall has an essay on her Web site titled "LSAT Discrimination and Minorities." The LSAT is an admissions test used at most law schools, a student can score between 120 and 180.

Characterizing the use of the LSAT as an admissions criteria, Randall says, "For example, based on an LSAT cutoff of 145, over 60 percent of black applicants will be presumptively denied, but only 20 percent of white applicants will be presumptively denied." This, according to Randall, is racial discrimination. It turns out that at top law schools such as University of Chicago, Yale and Harvard,



virtually even if a student scored 165 (better than 85 percent of test-takers) and had a GPA of 3.9, there's no guarantee of admission. At these law schools, the lowest LSAT scores and GPAs are 165 and 3.5, and their highs are 174 and 3.9 respectively.

Let's connect the dots between the Thernstroms' evidence and Randall's complaint. The typical black student enters college well behind the typical white student. This is partially evidenced by the 2002 average SAT scores of black students (867) compared to white students (1090), a 200-point difference.

The greatly poor 12 years of primary and secondary education that black students receive is not likely to be made up in four or five years of college, if ever. Therefore, no one should be surprised by poor black performance on graduate admissions tests such as LSAT, GRE and MCAT.

What makes the catch-up even more unlikely is the soft bigotry of law expectations and affirmative-action grating by white liberal professors and the selection by black students of trouble-making curricula such as black studies, women's

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Sunday, May 2, 2004 H-3

TONY AND KERRY ARE QUITE...

A team

TONY KNOWLES, TRYING to make the best of a bad deal, has pointed his finger at Democratic presidential front-runner John Kerry and valiantly said, "Tsk-tsk!" He and his press manipulators made headlines and the TV talking-head reports by declaring that Kerry, the multimillionaire senator from Massachusetts, is "just wrong" in his opposition to opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration and development.

So there, Sen. Kerry. Take that.

Knowles, the former governor who covets the Senate seat held by Republican Lisa Murkowski, says nothing new when he says Kerry is off base when it comes to ANWR.

Almost everybody in Alaska has known that for a long time. Even Tony. He also has long endorsed opening ANWR.

But so what?

What Tony Knowles, the Senate hopeful, has to say about Kerry, the White House wannabe, isn't going to make a whit of difference in the Democratic presidential race.

And it shouldn't make a tanker's dam to the Alaska Senate race either, because even were he to be elected, Knowles' position on ANWR will have zero influence on Kerry, should he be elected president.

KERRY IS beholden to the national environmental job-bies. He is in their pocket. Zapped up and put away. But he wasn't trapped in this position. It's exactly where he wants to be, and where he will stay — no matter what Tony Knowles the candidate — or even Tony Knowles the senator — might like to have otherwise.

Knowles is simply in a terrible fix. He has no choice but to criticize Kerry on this issue — thus joining Lisa Murkowski as a hard-holding buddy on the issue. But he also has to try to convince voters that they should elect him and, in process, perhaps put the Democrats back in control in the U.S. Senate — tossing Republican Ted Stevens out of his all-important seat as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, a job of vital importance to Alaska.

Tony can't win for losing, all things considered.

Electing him won't get us ANWR, no matter what. And electing him won't change Kerry's mind, if Kerry wins. If Kerry loses, and President Bush receives another term, Knowles as a senator still would be on the outs with the White House. But it sounds good for Knowles to say he's standing up against his party's likely presidential nominee. Firm. Clear. Backbone of steel. That sort of thing.

Some will find the situation amusing. Knowles surely won't, of course. After all, he's got to try any argument to make the case that he and Kerry really could be a great team in Washington.

Even if it means pulling the rug out from under Ted Stevens.

UAA awards a trio of doctoral honors

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

THE HONORARY degrees that will be conferred this afternoon at the University of Alaska Anchorage's commencement exercises will go to three well-known local folks, including the school's outgoing chancellor, Edward Lee Gorsuch. He's heading for retirement when this school term ends in June, moving with his wife, Ann, to Bolingham, Wash. to be nearer to grandchildren. Sharing honors with him will be Jerry H. Harper, Alaska's leading resident stage actor and a theater impresario of considerable fame, and Julie E. Kutta, who has led the Alaska Federation of Natives with distinction for the last 10 years or so.

Gorsuch will receive an honorary doctorate of letters. Harper and Kutta each will receive honorary doctorate of humane letters degrees.

The ceremonies, scheduled to begin at 3 o'clock at the Sullivan Arena, also will see Gorsuch named Chancellor Emeritus, and Dr. Tina Dolapp, retiring as director of UAA's acclaimed School of Nursing, will be honored as Professor Emerita.

ROGER G. CONNOR, who had a powerful impact on Alaska political, economic and social affairs over the span of 15 years that he served as an associate justice of the Alaska Supreme Court, will be remembered at a reception scheduled Tuesday, May 11, at the Hotel Captain Cook, beginning at 7 p.m.

His daughter, Shelly Gervold of Quinhua, Va., is inviting old personal friends and professional colleagues to the reception, which she plans as a celebration of the life and times of her father. Connor served on the state's highest court from 1968, when he was appointed by then-Gov. Walter J. Hickel, until his retirement in 1983. He died July 4, 1989, in Richmond, Va., at the age of 73. During his days on the court, Connor wrote in the neighborhood of 400 majority opinions and 70 dissenting opinions.



The only time he's got a 48-inch chest "is when he stands on his head!"

KEEPING TRACK: Bob Southall, who was general manager of the Hilton Anchorage before moving on three years ago, has taken over operation of the Gunsmoke Beach Resort, a hotel and land-an gambling casino on the beach at Ocean Shores, Wash. It bills itself as the state's "premier coastal destination."

Rooms include nine ocean suites and six casino suites. 16,000 square feet — offering roulette, blackjack, craps, poker and "the latest in Class III electronic gaming devices," which presumably is the nomenclature for slot machines that aren't exactly of the Las Vegas type. If you're heading for the Olympic Peninsula, you can call Southall at 360-298-9466. The reservation number for the resort, owned by the Gunsmoke Hotel, is 1-888-461-2214. The setting truly is gorgeous.

EMBARRASSING MOMENT: Dede Ralston tells this one on herself. She and her husband, Joe, the retired Air Force general who was head of NATO forces in Europe, were attending a fancy dinner in London a year or so ago when she was introduced to a man who gave his name as Alexander, from Belgrade. "Well, Alexander," asked Dede, "what do you do in Belgrade?" He replied, "I run the lung."

THE RALSTONS WERE on hand for the Catholic Social Services Charity Ball, a couple of Saturdays ago, but they missed the Anchorage Symphony's closing concert of the 2003-04 season the following weekend. And a good one it was. But so our editors' top-ranking retired general and others won't miss the show the next time around, let the word go out that the 2004-05 symphony season will begin with the annual Pops Concert on Aug. 29, a Saturday night. That's a week or so earlier than usual. And there's a change, too, for the opener of the orchestra's classic concert season. It will be on Oct. 15, which is a Friday — rather than Saturday night, when the symphony usually plays. The switch is being made to accommodate the schedule of the guest artist, world-famous violinist Midori.

WHILE ON THE SUBJECT: Midori is an internationally acclaimed performer who really does go by only one name. She is beginning her 21st year on tour, and over the years has played engagements on virtually all of the great concert stages of Europe, the Far East and North America. She was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1971, and now lives in New York City. For musicians in the stable, let the record show she plays a 1734 Guarnerius del Gesù "ex-Hiberman" violin. The translation, the instrument was once owned by Bronislaw Hiberman, a violinist who actually knew Beethoven. It was later acquired by Ruggero Ricci, who ultimately sold it to the Hayashibara Foundation, a high-powered Japanese cultural and educational organization — with the stipulation that it be put on a lifetime loan to Midori. For what it's worth, Midori uses three different bows on her concert tours — each of historic musical importance.

ON THE MORE immediate scene, Arthur Day will be observed here on Monday, May 17, with the planting of two Colorado green spruce trees at Chukotka Elementary School. The official celebration will be held in the school's multipurpose room at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Afterward, the actual fun of planting the trees will be handed out by several of the Chukotka students. All tree-planters in the audience are invited.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staffer editor

Sunday, May 1, 2004 B-7

TIME TO PICK UP . . .

Winter's trash

THIS IS that time between winter breakup and spring greenup when Anchorage looks downright seedy.

As always, the fading snow reveals a season's accumulation of garbage, papers blown out of pickup trucks and, yes, even cans and bottles thrown on the ground by passing motorists.

But it's a problem you can do something about. Grab a supply of garbage bags and clean up your yard and then your street. After that, start prowling your neighborhood and area roadways picking up every bit of errant paper, plastic and aluminum you can find.

Forget about the fact that you didn't put the mess there. It may not be your trash but it is your problem. You have to look at it. The stuff is a visual blight wished on you and your community by others, but it's not a problem you must live with. You can pick it up.

And the good news is that clean neighborhoods and cleaner highways bring a sense of pride and accomplishment to those who put aside their distaste for the mess and pick it up.

Next week is Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Citywide Cleanup Week. The annual campaign kicks off today and runs through next Saturday. One high-visibility event will be the chamber's annual Blue Jeans Luncheon, a casual business meal, rally and barbecue scheduled for Monday at Sullivan Arena.

MORE THAN 1,500 volunteers from the business and school communities usually attend the luncheon, which is a raucous affair sharply contrasting to the usually dignified chamber meals. Among the attractions is a "Trashy Fashion Show" in which participants wear such items as trash treasures and orange garbage bags.

In its announcement this year, the chamber mentioned that the Glenn Highway is one area that needs special attention from willing volunteers. The Glenn gets more than its share of trash and debris falling or being pushed from uncovered and unsecured loads on passing trucks.

Not all the garbage is misdirected papers and light items. Volunteers report finding mattresses, dining room chairs and even a kitchen sink. The Glenn Highway materials are not the kind of thing with which you could furnish a house or apartment, but those willing to make the effort to clean the road can be proud of their achievement and know that thousands of passersby will see the results.

If you haven't yet started, get out there and attack the trash, both in your neighborhood and along Anchorage roadways. When the leaves and flowers bloom in the coming weeks, they will beautifully landscape made ready for them by your work.

Mercury scare another political play

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

If you've read a newspaper lately, chances are you've seen an ad claiming that millions of women who eat tuna and other fish with mercury are poisoning their children. That sure sounds bad. Only problem is, it's a whole lot worse.

About the only thing the ads do prove is that trusting "environmentalists" in a political debate is harmful to your health and the national well being. Their fury this time is directed at Bush Administration plans to reduce mercury emissions from utilities 70 percent by 2018. They want the regulation to go even further — never mind that the Clinton Administration did nothing to reduce emissions — and their strategy is to scare pregnant women.

Friends of the Earth is running a national newspaper ad pushing cute kids with the subtle tag line, "They're being poisoned." The Sierra Club proclaims that five million women have "dangerous levels of mercury in their bodies," while the supposedly moderate Environmental Defense estimates "more than 600,000 newborns each year are put at risk of brain damage and learning disabilities." Also in on this horror show are the Natural Resources Defense Council and MomsOn.org, the George Soros political hedge fund.

This is all pretty low, even by green standards. But it gets worse when you consider that there's no evidence to suggest that cutting emissions will reduce mercury in fish. There's also no credible science showing America faces any health threat at all from current fish consumption.

Some 55 percent of all mercury emissions are an natural — from oceans, volcanoes and forest fires — and another 42 percent are man-made outside of America. U.S. power plants produce just 1 percent of global mercury emissions. No surprise then that though U.S. mercury emissions have fallen significantly since 1970, studies have found no change in mercury levels in Pacific tuna.

Even if the world got rid of every power plant, fish would still ingest radioactive isotopes. Either way, the kids who

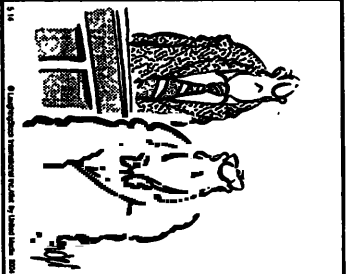


Illustration by [Name] for The Wall Street Journal.

"Our honor, a 25-year jail sentence would jeopardize my client's job at the supermarket."

usually occurring mercury. Studies of 550-year-old Aleutian mummies show more mercury content than in people today.

Does this mercury hurt us? The gold standard in mercury research is a University of Rochester study that tracked a group of Seychelles Island children from birth to nine years old. While their mothers ate fish similar to that consumed in the U.S., they ate 10 times as much and had an average of six times as much mercury in their bodies. Yet researchers found no negative effects in their children.

The super-greens base their misinformation on a problematic study of Faroese island children. The Faroese mothers also consumed enormous amounts of mercury, though from seafood (such as whale) meat. Americans don't eat. When their children were given IQ neuropsychological tests, some scored slightly below-average on three.

Scientists have since disputed whether there was ever a statistical correlation and note that, even if there was, it's impossible to know it was caused by mercury (the mothers were consuming high levels of such other toxins as PCBs and DDT). Either way, the kids who

scored marginally below peers on a few tests didn't probably have "learning disabilities" or "brain damage."

Moreover, the U.S. mercury "safety level" (which the EPA unfortunately sets off the Faroese study) is one-tenth that of the smallest amount of mercury needed with a lower Faroese test score. A Food and Drug Administration official has pointed out that even women who are over the U.S. limit still have an eight-fold margin of safety. All this science is compiled neatly at the Center for Science and Public Policy (www.cspolicy.org).

Why then is the Bush Administration reducing mercury? It has no choice. The NRDG (now running hysterical ads) said the Clinton EPA over mercury, but the agency refused to do anything until the day after Al Gore conceded the election in 2000. That's when it decided mercury should be regulated and tossed the problem to Mr. Bush. This has conveniently allowed former EPA head Carol Browner, who ignored mercury in her tenure, to hawl over the Bush proposals.

The Bush plan is a sensible "cap and trade" reduction of the kind that worked for acid rain. If the White House has made a mistake, it is in not fighting back aggressively enough on the health dangers posed by this mercury scare.

The greens are warning pregnant women away from fish that provide vitamins A, E and C, protein, and omega-3 fatty acids. Fish not only help reduce heart attacks and interfere with the progression of breast cancer, they contribute to infant eye and brain development.

The silver lining here may be that these environmentalist scares are becoming so routine and over-the-top that they are having less public impact. Americans are figuring out that green activists have abandoned any claim to scientific objectivity as they pursue political power. Ignore their claims, and enjoy your next tuna sandwich.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
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GREENS CAMPAIGN USES . . .

False claims

IF KETCHIKAN didn't have enough problems, now environmentalists are trying to stamp to death one of its best hopes for reviving a small spark in its near-dead timber industry.

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough is trying to find an operator for the veneer plant it bought after Gateway Forest Products went broke in 2001.

Those interested have until today to respond to its request for proposals, but at least one prospective operator has been bombarded by more than 1,000 telephone calls from green militants trying to drive it away. The calls were made in an intense three-day period.

Timber Products Co. in Springfield, Ore., indicated it was looking at the Ketchikan veneer plant as a potential producer of plywood products. That public indication of interest brought it a deluge of calls from write members of the Alaska Rainforest Campaign, the Alaska Coalition and others whipped up by e-mail calls to action.

The greens showed an impressive ability to ram urgent appeals, anger and spleen on the company. But one problem with the telephone campaign is that it was based on false information.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL groups' minions were told that Timber Products Co. would be logging old-growth timber from the Tongass National Forest. But the plant can't even handle old-growth timber and is designed for second-growth logs, which come mostly from areas that were cut in previous years and have grown new crops of trees.

The second-growth logs have a smaller diameter than old-growth trees. They don't have anywhere near the "mystique" accorded by ardent greens to the much-larger trees that have never been harvested.

"We have identified second-growth logs that would provide all the wood the mill would require," said Roger Rutan, vice president of marketing for Timber Products. "The issue of old-growth is not on the table. The mill can't handle logs more than 20 inches" (in diameter).

Whether the telephone-storm approach will work remains to be seen. Though the U.S. Forest Service is planning timber sales on Gravina Island, the Ketchikan Borough is concerned that it might receive no bids on the plant. If that happens, it will look at selling off the plant's machinery.

"We don't want it to sit through another winter without it being operational," said Roy Eckert, borough manager. "The equipment is too valuable to just sit and rust."

Environmental opposition has virtually destroyed most of the timber industry in Southeast Alaska, putting thousands out of work.

Now the greens are using misinformation and heavy-handed tactics to keep them unemployed.

Obstacles divert school resources

By CAROL COMEAU

Teaching children and improving our schools has been the focus of my 40-year career in education. I believe all students can learn and that public education gives every child in this country an equal chance to be successful. Those same beliefs are the foundation of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

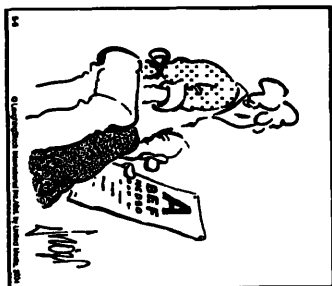
Some very positive changes have resulted from the act and Alaska's own Quality Schools Initiative. At the same time, the penalties included in the act create obstacles for student achievement by diverting funding away from instruction.

First, the positives: Our district is more focused and goal-oriented than ever. Teachers, parents and the business community have strengthened partnerships as they work together to determine what works best in each school and what is most important to a quality education.

We're looking beyond class and school averages to focus on the progress each child is making and how we can better serve each student. Having 95 percent of our high school seniors pass the exit exam is evidence of our success.

During the next few weeks, parents and schools will receive results from the standardized tests most students took this spring. These test results tell us much more than whether a student is keeping pace with his peers. Using test data, we can identify exactly which skills each child still needs to master.

Teachers review data for their classes and determine which lessons are most needed. After looking at schoolwide data, schools can design special programs and teacher training to address the subject areas that need improvement. And, as a district, we use data to modify our curriculum and develop our six-year instructional plan. All of these changes are great for kids.



"Whoever heard of anyone studying for an eye examination?"

On the other hand, we are using scarce resources administering the act when we could be using the funds in the classroom. This year, we spent more than \$1 million meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind Act.

Instead of spending \$1 million on testing, we spent it on required administrative tasks like tracking teacher qualifications, sending notifications and modifying our information technology systems to keep up with mandated reporting. These are not one-time expenses as we are constantly monitoring and responding to frequent changes in state and federal regulations.

This federal law that aims to improve our schools takes resources from the schools that need them most. Twenty-one Anchorage schools receive Title I federal funds. These are the schools with the highest poverty and transiency rates in Anchorage. They serve many language learners at these schools must overcome many socio-economic challenges while making academic progress.

Historically, schools have used Title I money to fund things proven to help students such as reducing class size, hiring teacher assistants, improving teacher training and providing tutorial pro-

grams. However, when these schools struggle to keep up with federal standards, the act prescribes how Title I funds will be used. Does the law require that funds be used to pay for instruction? Quite the opposite, struggling schools must use Title I funds on non-instructional expenses such as transporting children to another school. Our Title I schools are reducing staff size and cutting programs for 2004-2005 so they can fund administrative tasks. Next year we could spend as much as \$1 million just transporting students out of Title I schools.

Transporting students away from their home school is one example of an mandate in the act that is not instructionally sound. We know that students in our district benefit from remaining in the same school for an extended period of time, their test scores are markedly higher than those of their transient peers.

The federal government recognizes the benefit of stability; that's why the McKinney-Vento Act mandates housing homeless students to their neighborhood school when families are in transition. Parents know the benefit of schooling kids close to home, that's why less than 2 percent of families nationwide have chosen the transportation offered by No Child Left Behind Act.

Yet while we work to reduce mobility, the act encourages it by giving students the option of leaving to another school if test scores in their home school aren't up to par. This is just one example of an mandate in the act that is an obstacle to student achievement.

All local educators join me in wanting what is best for kids. We want every child to succeed so we continually evaluate our progress and our programs in terms of student achievement. We are not afraid of accountability and we embrace the school improvement movement.

Unfortunately, the No Child Left Behind Act is more about penalizing schools and districts than it is about putting resources into improving instruction in all schools.

Carol Comeau is superintendent of the Anchorage School District.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

RADICAL GROUPS . . .

Block growth

WHEN ENVIRONMENTALISTS profess to have the states' best interests at heart, you have to admire their ability to keep a straight face. After all, they are doing everything in their power to block development that could bring needed jobs.

Last week, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center — in an eleventh-hour appeal of a Clean Water Act permit granted during the four-year process to run approval for the Pogo gold mine near Delta Junction — managed at last to stall the mine project. As many as 300 workers were hired, and may be out of work for as long as a year.

Despite weak protestations from the greens that the appeal "is not the engine" for shutting down the Tack-Pogo Inc. operation, a company spokesman said the shutdown was absolutely necessary. The Canadian mining company has to know what it can build before it starts work, he said.

The Pogo mine joins a growing list of embattled projects All across Alaska, greens and their lawyers over the years have worked diligently to thwart development.

Last month, the Alaska Rainforest Campaign and the Alaska Coalition organized a telephone call-in campaign to inundate the Oregon-based Timber Products Co. as it considered reopening Ketchikan's shuttered veneer mill. Why? Because the mill would use wood from the Tongass National Forest — which greens view as their de facto national park. SUCH NONSENSE goes on and on. Environmentalists devastated the timber industry in Southeast Alaska.

They opposed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. When the subject of drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska — set aside some ago for just that purpose — well, they had objections about that, too.

The Natural Resources Defense Council, the Trustees for Alaska, the Sierra Club, Southeast Alaska Environmental Council, Earthjustice and the Northern Alaska Environmental Center have worked hard to stymie Alaska's growth.

Even when they have failed, and they have failed numerous times, their efforts have added delay and expense. Their largest success is in sending the message around the world that investing in Alaska is unwise.

Perhaps the silliest thing about all this is that there is absolutely no reason for greens not to sue whenever they feel like wrapping their no-growth agenda in the mantle of the "public interest" and heading to court. Why should they worry? Win or lose, Alaskans pay their court costs. They get a special break from the courts.

The Legislature passed a law to correct that unfairness, but a Superior Court judge tossed it out. This state needs to craft new legislation that will make environmental groups think twice before filing frivolous appeals and lawsuits.

If the greens are allowed to continue unchecked, Alaskans will have the unwelcome privilege of continuing to underwrite their drive to turn Alaska into a vast park.

Greens headed in wrong direction

By TOM BRENNAN

It's time to take back the environment from environmentalists, time to tell the green extremists to take a hike. These days the greens are not, as one group claims to be, "friends of the earth" so much as they are enemies of the economy.

They seem to believe that the best way to protect the nation's birds, animals and wild lands is to throw a monkey wrench into any project that would create jobs for people.

I once considered myself an environmentalist, and only stopped thinking that way when the so-called greens showed their true colors years ago.

I love the outdoors and spend as much time there as I possibly can. I go afield hunting, fishing, along, walking and use every excuse I can think of to get out there. I support conservation groups like Ducks Unlimited and the Alaska Waterfowl Association, groups that were fighting for clean air and water and animal habitat long before the green extremists conducted their first angry lobbying campaigns.

The greens have been very successful in their wars. They own the souls — or at least the votes — of many members of Congress, including Democratic presidential nominee-apparent John Kerry.

I'm sure they can (and will) point to good things they have done, but in my book their incessant war against all resource development projects in Alaska offsets all that is good.

I worked on the oilpatch for a number of years before I got back to journalism, including a stint at the pipeline company. In those jobs I learned from personal experience that most greens were adversaries whose interests were primarily in blocking all progress, including and perhaps especially projects carried out with utmost care and protection for the natural world.



Brennan

Rather than work with industry leadership to protect the natural world while development proceeds here, they prefer to drive investment away from Alaska and America, where environmental protections assure clean projects.

But people need jobs. They are a very important part of the environment, not because they are merely at the top of the food chain, but because they are many and their legitimate needs are so great.

Those who would block job-producing projects like the Tack-Pogo gold mine, just because federal rules allow them to, are no friends to the earth.

Tack-Pogo would not be an environmental problem. Its water-collection system was endorsed by all government agencies involved and would remove harmful chemicals from runoff and produce only pure water. The long delay and forced layoffs at the mine are unnecessary and were caused by a sneak attack from people with a suspect agenda.

The major companies operating in Alaska are mostly large firms with a global view and self-imposed rules for responsible behavior everywhere they operate.

But not all the world's companies do things that way. Some — especially those based in countries with less lofty standards — adapt their practices to local customs and regulations. They go that far and no further. The net impact on the environment is often negative.

But traditional conservation groups like Ducks Unlimited and the old Northern Wildlife Federation made tremendous gains in the battle against pollution years before the greens took over the movement — and they are still making them.

In the New England town where I grew up, the river ran a different color every day depending on the color of the being run at the paper mill, which used the river as a sewer for its liquid wastes.

Today that river runs clean and clear and its water is just about drinkable. It also has a healthy population of trout. The battle for the river lasted for years and was won by traditional conservationists and environmental moderates who just wanted clean water, not those with political, social and economic agendas like the activists in today's extremist green groups.

I won't make any friends among them with this column. But some things just need to be said.

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Illustration by GARY GALT © 2004 JAMES GALT INC.

There are good people in the environmental movement. I know some of them and respect their beliefs. But the overall impact of the wider green groups these days is bad for Alaska, bad for the economy and bad for the environment they claim to love.

I consider joblessness, poverty and hunger to be especially pernicious forms of pollution. The green extremists make the joblessness problem worse here, but they do help out with poverty and hunger in developing parts of the world.

They believe that by driving investments away from our shores and into countries where the economic boost can improve the hunger problem. The downside is that environmental operating rules and oversight in those countries are all but non-existent.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

POMV ISSUE COMING DOWN ...

To the wire

THE CONSTITUTIONAL amendment passed by the Alaska House late Monday was what could be called a clean POMV bill.

That is, it calls only for use of the percent of market value approach for determining how much should be taken out of the Permanent Fund each year for things like state expenses and dividend checks.

It does not mandate how much of the 5 percent can be used for the state budget and how much for dividends. Nor does it attempt to enshrine the dividend in the constitution.

But POMV faces tougher sledding in the Senate, where more convoluted versions of the measure await. Among the proposals there are ones that would enshrine dividends and allow a portion of the fund earnings to be spent on state government, primarily for education.

Many members of the Senate are worried that any version of POMV that goes on the general election ballot this year would be doomed to defeat. The issue is complicated and a large portion of the public is suspicious and worried that any change to management of the Permanent Fund would threaten dividend checks.

The thinking goes that if POMV goes on the ballot and is voted down, the defeat could mean that a sensible approach to using fund earnings and paying for government — while continuing to pay dividends — would be impossible for many years to come.

HAVING POMV die in the Senate would be a shame, but there would be no cause for panic. The reality is that the end of the session is fast approaching and sending the issue to the voters at the wrong time could be disastrous and needlessly complicate the state's ability to manage its fiscal affairs.

With a contentious presidential election and a hotly contested Senate race on the ballot, the smokes of those battles could distract voters from thoughtful arguments on a complicated matter and bring POMV to a crushing defeat.

The House and Gov. Frank Murkowski deserve praise for their efforts to resolve the state's money gap. But putting POMV before the voters another time, in another election cycle, could actually improve chances of solving the fiscal gap.

In the meantime, the Legislature could continue to work within the existing system and continue to pay dividends under the formula used for many years. And when the need for using a portion of Permanent Fund earnings for state government arrives — as it surely will — legislators should do exactly that.

Dividends can still be paid, and they almost certainly will be. No legislator wants to deprive his constituents of those annual cash payments. But the needs of the state as a whole cannot be ignored and some of the fund earnings must eventually be used for the purpose for which the fund was established — to pay the future cost of state government.

The future has arrived.

South America does boarding right

By ELISE PATNOTAK

An inspector general's report came out recently that claims that passenger screening at airports is no better today than it was 17 years ago.

On reading the report, Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio said, "The inadequacies and loopholes in the system are phenomenal."

According to a news report on the Web recently, "The inspector general's report, as well as a study by the GAO, portrayed the TSA as an unresponsive, inflexible bureaucracy that is failing to provide an adequate level of security at airports."

Again, according to this news story, Inspector General Clark Kent Ervin told lawmakers the TSA screens and privately contracted airport workers performed about the same, which is to say, equally poorly.

First of all, let me say bravo to Inspector General Clark Kent Ervin's mother who clearly had no qualms about naming her son after her favorite comic book fantasy And don't we all feel better in some way knowing that Clark Kent is in charge?



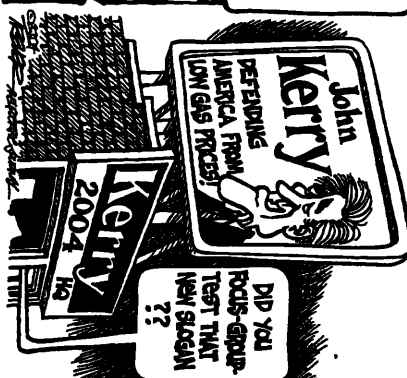
Patnotak

Secondly, let me just say that if security is now no better than it was 17 years ago, I want to know why I'm standing in line for an hour to get through security and why I practically have to strip nude to pass muster and be allowed on the plane.

I should state at the outset that as someone who has traveled extensively, I am all for tight security. I am more than willing to show up two hours early for a flight if that security will keep out people who might want to land the plane in on in a skyscraper somewhere.

But when I think about the fact that they took a small pair of scissors away from me that I'd forgotten were in my carry-on bag, I have to wonder how they could find them but not real weapons. Or when I remember the old

SAMU ABAMA PROMISED PUSH TO KEEP OIL PRICES DOWN BEFORE THE ELECTION? THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE!



lady with a walker and oxygen hose being pulled aside for making some half going through security, it makes me wonder if security isn't still poor because we're wasting our time trying to confirm that the hell changed because of the metal in her orthopedic shoe.

And while I think profiling of any sort is a slippery slope for a democracy to start on, the idea that you have to be so blind to the probabilities of one person over another being a potential hazard to flight that you are strip-searching 2-year-olds does seem to border on the ridiculous.

As my friend said when they called her out of line to search her bag, "I hope they find a present in his diaper. Then they can change him."

If you want real security at airports, then get serious like they do in many South American countries. I'll never forget my departure from Peru many years ago.

You went to the ticket counter and checked in. They kept your ticket and handed you a paper that allowed you to go through security. At security, they took your carry-on bags. You didn't see them again till you were boarding.

It may sound complicated but it certainly seemed to work. You don't hear about a lot of plane hijackings in South America. And if we are going to spend so much on airport security anyway, we should at least get good service for our money, time and patience.

Meanwhile, rest easy tonight. Clark Kent is protecting you.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

GOVERNOR PUSHES FISCAL PLAN WITH

Road show

WITH THE MAY 11 end of the legislative session looming, and with the odds looking long for a legislative session to the state's chronic budget gap, Gov. Frank Murkowski has hit the road to win public approval for his fiscal plan.

Murkowski wants a constitutional amendment that would allow Permanent Fund earnings, this year in the \$1.4 billion range, to be used for annual dividends for Alaskans and government operations. If passed by a two-thirds majority of the Legislature, the plan could be on this year's general election ballot.

The governor is facing halting Democrats who abhorredly want higher taxes on the oil industry — and everybody else — and dissenting Republican members of the Senate who fear that voters will reject the plan, slamming the door on the use of fund earnings for years to come.

To deal with those problems, Murkowski is traveling around the state to put out the details of his proposal to the public. He's hoping lawmakers will feel pressured to act. The governor has lobbied business leaders and others in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks to win support for his plan. News accounts indicate he has found receptive audiences. A recent poll indicates a majority of Alaskans want a fiscal plan this year.

MURKOWSKI'S PROPOSAL would change the management of the fund to a percent-of-market-value approach. There are several variations of the POMV under discussion in Juneau. Generally, they would take up to 5 percent of the fund's five-year average value and use that amount for dividends and some form government spending, most likely education.

Some of the POMV plans have added protections for the fund's corpus in bad years. Others rely the pure POMV approach that depends on the fund's long-term growth. The POMV method was suggested by the fund's trustees and is in use by some of the largest funds in the nation.

The net result of adopting a POMV approach would be about \$600 million of the fund's earnings being used for government and about \$600 million for dividends that would be larger than those expected this year and next. Over the years, the dividends are expected to be more than \$1,000.

The choices are few. Devastating cuts to government that could topple the state into a severe recession are not the answer, Murkowski says, and neither are the onerous taxes that would be necessary to balance the budget. But both, he says, are the only alternatives if a fiscal plan such as his is not adopted by the Legislature.

Skyscraping oil prices have dulled the sense of urgency somewhat, with the fiscal gap this year expected to be \$80 million, but that is a poor reason not to act. The gap could widen tomorrow.

The governor has the right idea. We hope his road show succeeds. We hope the Legislature can do what is necessary

Kerry's war plans don't make sense

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

In 1952, a presidential candidate running against an administration that had gotten the United States into a debilitating and inconclusive war abroad pledged "I will go to Korea." He won.

A half-century later, a presidential candidate running against an administration that has gotten the United States into a debilitating and (thus far) inconclusive war abroad pledges "I will go to the UN."

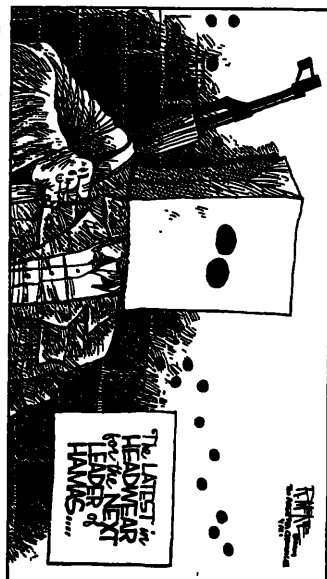
Electing, is it not? And Democrats are wondering why their man is trading a rather wounded George Bush not just overall, but on Iraq — and precisely at a time when Iraq is going so badly.

"If I'm president," John Kerry said, "I will not only personally go to the UN, I will go to other capitals. For Kerry, showing up at Kofi Annan's doorstep and sweeping through allied capitals is no rhetorical flourish, no strategic sideshow. It is the essence of his Iraq plan. "Within weeks of being inaugurated, I will return to the UN and I will literally, formally regain the community of nations and turn over a proud new chapter in America's relationship with the world."

This is an Iraq policy? Never has a more serious question received a more foolish answer. Going back to the UN? What does that mean? It cannot mean nothing. It must mean going back to the Security Council.

There are five permanent members we are one. The British are already with us. So that leaves China, India, and at least to our Middle East adventure, though generally hostile, and Russia, which has opposed the war from the very beginning. Moscow was so wedded to Saddam Hussein that it was doing everything it could to prevent an imperial Paul Volcker commission from investigating the corrupt oil-for-food program that enriched Hussein and, through lockboxes, hundreds of others in dozens of countries, including Russia.

That leaves France. What does Kerry think France will do for us? Perhaps he sees himself and Texas descending on Paris like Jack and Jackie in Camelot days. Does he really believe that if the grovels before Jacques Chirac in



well-accented French, France will join in a war that it has opposed from the beginning that is now going badly, and that has moved Iraq out of the French sphere of influence and into the American?

The idea is so absurd that when Tim Russert interviewed Kerry and quipped "Democrat foreign policy adviser: No Deal" as saying that handing political and military responsibility to the United Nations and other countries is not realistic, Kerry simply dodged the question. There was nothing to say.

Which may help inside-the-Beltway Washington find its way out of its current drum over the latest polls. No one can understand how, with the president being Richard Clarke, the Sept. 11 commission hearings, the Woodward book and the eruption of Iraq into open warfare again, Bush nonetheless has gained over Kerry on the issue of national security.

The answer is simple: Americans are a serious people, war is a serious business, and what John Kerry is offering is simply not serious. Americans may be unsure whether Bush has a plan for success in Iraq. But they are sure as hell know that going to UN headquarters, visiting foreign capitals and promising lots of jaw-jaw is no plan at all. I give Kerry credit for not taking the easy outwarg path. He agrees that abandoning Iraq would be catastrophic for the United States and for the war on

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
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LISA MURKOWSKI TAKES ON ...

Ninth Circuit

COMMON SENSE has long been absent among those who defend the size of the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. They refuse to acknowledge that the court is far too big, its case load far too large, most of its judges too far removed from the real life of much of the area they are supposed to serve.

Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski is the latest to take up the battle to break up the court. We wish her better luck than others before her who for years and years have been preaching judicial sanity, only to be beaten back by the force of California politics.

The court's headquarters is in San Francisco. The California bar and the California judges on the court — who far outnumber jurists from other states who serve on the Ninth Circuit — throw up roadblock after roadblock.

For some reason, they seem to take some kind of territorial pride in keeping the Ninth Circuit just the way it is — despite the fact that, in many ways, it is the laughingstock of the federal court system. More of its rulings are routinely overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court than any other appellate court in the country.

You almost sense the court takes pride in its shabby record.

SEN. MURKOWSKI, wisely and with great hopes, has introduced a bill that offers two new options that go beyond previous proposals that have gotten nowhere.

One of her plans would leave Nevada and California in the Ninth Circuit, and create a new circuit that would include Alaska, Hawaii, the Pacific Northwest states and the Pacific territories of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

The other — which has considerable appeal — would split the existing court into thirds one including California, Hawaii and the Pacific territories in the Ninth Circuit, another, a new 12th Circuit, which would include Arizona, Nevada, Montana and Idaho, and a new 13th Circuit which would embrace Alaska, Washington and Oregon.

She calls the last of these three the Pacific Northwest Circuit Court of Appeals.

The reasons for this are obvious and have been stated often. It's worth repeating a few of them. Judges named to the new circuits would have a better understanding of the issues that come before them, the caseloads now weighing down the existing court would be spread over the new regions, decisions would be rendered in a more timely fashion, and, to use a phrase that may seem trite, justice would be better served.

Last year the Ninth Circuit had 11,377 cases pending — 4,510 more than the next busiest circuit court.

The matter, she says, "just cries out for reform."

Alaska's senator is right on target.

Consider the rationale of racial profiling

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

What is racial profiling, and is it racist? We can think of profiling as using cheap-to-observe characteristics as indicators or proxies for more costly-to-observe characteristics.

A person's physical characteristics, such as race, sex and height, are cheap to observe, and they might be correlated with some other characteristic that's more costly to observe such as disease, strength or ability.

Profiling examples abound. Just knowing that one person is 6 feet 9 inches tall allows one to predict that he's a better basketball player than a 4-foot-5-inch-tall person. That might be called height profiling. While height is not a perfect indicator of basketball proficiency, there is a strong association.

Similarly, just knowing the sex or age of an individual allows one to make predictions about unobserved characteristics such as weightlifting ability, running and reflex speed, and eyesight and hearing acuity because they are correlated with sex and age.



What about using Williams race or ethnicity as proxies for some unobserved characteristic? Some racial and ethnic groups have a higher incidence of mortality from various diseases than the national average.

In 1998, mortality rates for cardiovascular diseases were approximately 30 percent higher among black adults than among white adults. Cervical cancer rates were almost five times higher among Vietnamese women in the United States than among white women.

The Pima Indians of Arizona have the highest known diabetes rates in the world. Prostate cancer is nearly twice as common among black men as white men.

Would one condemn a medical practitioner for advancing greater screening and monitoring of black males for cardiovascular disease?

Worldwide, black males for cardiovascular disease were approximately 30 percent higher among black adults than among white adults. Cervical cancer rates were almost five times higher among Vietnamese women in the United States than among white women.

The Pima Indians of Arizona have the highest known diabetes rates in the world. Prostate cancer is nearly twice as common among black men as white men.

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drowsier disease and prostate cancer, or greater screening and monitoring for cervical cancer among Vietnamese American females, and the same for diabetes among Pima Indians? It surely would be racial profiling — using race as an indicator of a higher probability of some other characteristic.

You might say that's different and that using racial profiling as a proxy for potential criminal behavior is indeed racist. Just as race and ethnicity are not perfect indicators of the risk of certain diseases, neither is race a perfect indicator of criminal activity, but they are associations, and people act on those associations.

A Washington, D.C., taxicab company, who is black, issued a safety advisory urging D.C.'s 6,800 cabbies to refuse to pick up "dangerous looking" passengers. She described "dangerous looking" as a "young black guy" with short hair hanging down longer than his coat, baggy pants, unlaced tennis shoes.

By no stretch of imagination does every young black person pose a threat to taxi drivers, but in Washington, D.C., and other cities, there's a strong correlation between race and the threat of robbery/murder.

We personally misinterpreted the motives of a taxi driver who passes up a black customer if we use racism as the sole explanation for his behavior. It might be racism, but it might just as easily and more probably be a fear of robbery, murder or being taken to a dangerous neighborhood. There are other examples and greater detail of this phenomenon in my recent Cornell Law and Public Policy Journal article "Discrimination: The Law's Morality."

Needless to say, the law-abiding black person who refused a taxi ride or pizza delivery or pulled over by the police is justifiably annoyed and offended. The rightful recipients of his anger should be those blacks who have made black synonymous with high crime and not the taxi driver or pizza deliverer who might fear for his life or the policeman trying to do his job.

God would never do profiling of any sort because God is omniscient. We humans lack that quality and must depend upon sometimes crude substitutes for finding out things.

By the way, attempting to explain a problem for or against it any more than attempting to explain gravity requires one to be far, or against gravity.

Walter E. Williams is a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. His column is distributed by Creators Syndicate Inc., 6777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045, (310) 337-7003.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

GOVERNOR SIGNS PACT TO EXPEDITE...

Gas line

THE GAS PIPELINE took a small but valuable step forward last week when Gov. Frank Murkowski signed an agreement with TransCanada Corp. to expedite right-of-way work on the line.

TransCanada holds authorizations and right-of-way leases for the Alaska Highway route through Canada and has held right-of-way permits on federal lands along the Alaska section since 1976.

The agreement, signed by Murkowski, will allow the governor's office to move forward on right-of-way leases across state lands. It also calls for TransCanada to file a stranded gas application for the 35 trillion cubic feet of natural gas already discovered on the North Slope.

TransCanada apparently does not propose to build the Alaska portion of the pipeline. The governor's announcement of the agreement noted that the company "is prepared to convey the right-of-way lease to the entity that would become the commercial developer of the project in Alaska."

The agreement included the caveat that whoever builds the pipeline "would need to enter into an exclusive interconnection agreement with TransCanada to connect to its pipeline system at the Alaska/Yukon border." The company is a major Canadian energy carrier with more than 24,000 miles of pipeline.

THE AGREEMENT also acknowledges that the North Slope producers will need to be part of the equation. The producers — BP Exploration (Alaska), ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips — hold the rights to the gas and have also filed a stranded gas application.

TransCanada already has working relationships with the producers and the Alaska congressional delegation. The company has worked with them for the last two years — and with the Canadian federal and provincial governments — in support of legislation needed on both sides of the border to move the pipeline forward.

Much needs to be done before construction can actually begin. Several critical pieces of legislation are now pending before Congress, pieces that could improve the economics of the pipeline and make it a viable investment for the producers.

Those incentives are being championed by Sen. Lisa Murkowski and include a federal loan guarantee, a tax credit that would reduce the cost of building a gas condensing plant on the North Slope, a tax deduction allowing for accelerated depletion of sections of the pipeline within Alaska, and tax relief that kicks in if the price of gas drops severely.

Whether the essential ingredients can be brought together this year remains to be seen, but the TransCanada agreement should allow the project to move forward while the political debate rages on.

The birds of summer are back again

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

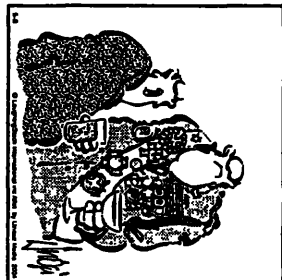
ALL IN ALL, THIS surely was one of the quickest and smoothest breakups in the all-time history of mud-dy springs in Anchorage. Those huge heaps of snow that were left from winter's record 111-plus-inch snowfall mostly vanished in a puff — leaving behind, of course, the usual clutter of trash, litter, debris and junk that emerges in an ugly mess once the seasons change from dark to light. Other signs of spring: the reverses headed for the hills and the sea gulls and the Canada geese returned on Easter weekend. And the city's week-long community cleanup drive begins May 3. Yell pitch in, please.



Tobin

ANOTHER HAPPY DAY: As of today, Craig Campbell, the state's adjutant general and the commander of the Alaska National Guard, is a brigadier general with one star. But this Friday he will put on his second star and move up in rank to major general. The promotion ceremony for Campbell, who wears Air Force blue, will take place at 4:30 p.m. in the eighth-floor atrium of the State Office Building in Juneau. The next day, Campbell will be back in Anchorage, the honoree at a Saturday evening reception on the Howard Rock Ballroom of the Sheraton Anchorage. The affair, hosted by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, begins at 6 p.m. and will run until 8 o'clock.

UP, UP AND AWAY: Your friends by pilots of Alaska Airlines are at the controls of 108 aircraft. Forty of them are 737-400s, 26 are MD-80s, 22 are 737-700s, 12 are 737-900s, and eight are 737-200Cs. Those are numbers to remember while awaiting the opening of the new C Concourse at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, scheduled for a public preview on June 29 and the beginning of operations on June 30. No matter that it's two years behind schedule and cost more than \$408 million.



"Hey, Luv! Was it 1958 I got my bronze medal for the torch?"

him, up a fed from the original estimate of \$220 million when the work began in 1999. Heading to the Orient? Alaska Veterans, Japan Airlines and Omni International will be offering big-time summer non-stop service between Anchorage and the Land of the Rising Sun. There will be 23 flights between here and Narita — eight by Alaska Airlines and 14 by JAL. Alaska Veterans also will offer two round trips from Oka and one from Seady Omi to have here and Osaka. The service begins in mid-June and winds down in mid-September.

POLITICAL NUMBERS: Alaska's Dan Young is off and running for his 17th term in the U.S. House, where he stands in the No. 4 spot in the Republican pecking order. His re-election prospects are as certain as tomorrow's sunrise.

Ted Stevens has served in the U.S. Senate for 35 years and 4 months, and by this time next month he will move into a tie for 18th place among the longest-serving senators ever, matching the record of William B. Allison of Iowa. If you never heard of Allison, don't feel you're out of touch with political events. The Iowa Republican was elected to the Senate in 1873, and died in office in 1908. But Allison still tops Stevens in congressional service. He served four terms in the U.S. House before he moved to the Senate.

SUNDAY SHORT TAKES: The

University of Alaska Board of Regents will meet here June 9-10. Key Bills, a long-time Anchorage volunteer on a dozen different projects, is moving to Washington, D.C., in mid-July. She'll be joining Group One, an agency dealing with Native affairs, with a focus on veterans and women-owned businesses. Lt. Col. Phil (Carl) Chennell, former commander of the Air Force Band of the Pacific at Eisenhower and for the last six years the commander and conductor of the Air Force Academy Band at Colorado Springs, will be at the podium for his final concert with the band on May 12. He's scheduled to wind up his active duty career on July 16, then go on temporary leave as he heads for retirement, effective Oct. 1.

FOR UNIVERSITY of Washington alumni in the audience, take note that the Huskies will open the football season on a Sunday this fall — Sept. 5 at home against Fresno State. The Huskies don't play again until Saturday, Sept. 18, hosting UCLA — and then will highlight it for South Bend for an on-the-road headliner against Notre Dame Sept. 25. The Huskies and the regular season at Washington State Nov. 20. The Cougars, meanwhile, will open their season with a Friday night game, Sept. 3, at New Mexico. The following week, they will be in Seattle on Sept. 11, hosting Colorado in a game at Seahawks Stadium. Washington State's first home game in Pullman will be Sept. 18, against Idaho.

SUNDAY FUNDAY: It's older than Mount McKinley, but let's repeat it anyway: You ask, "Why are the engines red?" Well, fire engines are red because newspapers are read, too. And 2 plus 2 equals 4, and 4 plus 8 is 12. Twelve inches is a ruler. Queen Mary was a ruler, and the Queen Mary was a ship. A ship sails the hungry deep. And in the hungry deep are fishes. Fishes have fins. The Finns fought the Russians. Russians were red. Fire engines are always red. So that's why the engines are red. Next question, please.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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WASHINGTON VOTERS NEED NEW WAY TO . . .

Cast ballots

OUR FRIENDS IN Washington state are still having a terrible time coming up with a new primary election system. The state needs something to replace the wide-open, blanket primary the people loved — but which the U.S. Supreme Court has nixed.

The search has been going on for some agonizing months, moved ahead a couple of weeks ago when Gov. Gary Locke vetoed a bill in which the Legislature called for a so-called "top 2" primary, pattered after a Louisiana system that includes all candidates on the ballot, but only the top two finishers — regardless of party — move to the general election. As a result of the way the legislation was written, his veto gave Locke the power to order a new primary system following Montana's practice. Under this method, candidates appear on separate primary ballots, but voters choose which ballot to cast.

The Washington Grange, the original sponsors of the blanket primary in 1930, promised an immediate court challenge to Locke's action, plus a ballot initiative to overturn it in case the judicial appeal fails.

The state's chief election officer, Secretary of State Sam Reed, didn't think much of the governor's veto, either. "Killing the Top 2 primary takes away the public's right to vote for the person, not the party, and threatens our proud history of independence," Reed said.

Turn them in

ANYBODY WITH even the vaguest suspicion about the identity of two young miscreants who police believe damaged a heavy metal ball from an overpass on the Glenn Highway so that it could be struck by a vehicle should immediately call the authorities.

The two are suspected of suspending the ball by rope from the North Peters Creek interchange. A Chevrolet Suburban smashed into the sphere at about 1:30 a.m. last Saturday. Nobody, thankfully, was injured although the vehicle sustained serious damage. Then the two are suspected of stealing a car to get away from police.

It is not too large a leap to assume that if they did such a murderous and reckless act once for kicks, they likely will try again. Their lack of regard for human life makes them especially dangerous. Whoever they are, this pair needs to be off the street, for their own good and the good of everybody else because they have more than proved they are potential killers.

Surely someone has an inkling of who they are. If you think you might, do us all, and yourself, a favor and tell the police before someone is killed or horribly injured. If these two want a thrill, we should give them a taste of the justice system where there are thrills aplenty.

Letters to The Times

Legislators represent public

As a homeowner and taxpayer, I do not agree with the suggested solutions in your editorial, "Is an End Near to AMATS Badger?"

Have you ever attended an AMATS (Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions) meeting? I have, and the system is not designed to serve the public. AMATS moves projects up and down based on politics, not needs. The Planning and Zoning Commission has been designated the commission representing the public, but the public doesn't have any designated method of influencing the system or what projects it supports.

You say, "The dispute might be solved by an advisory panel that Mayor Beggs is working on." The panel could include legislators and other members from the community.

Whenever some government agency doesn't want to include the public they form a "commission to investigate" or an "advisory group" to advise. Neither is elected or responsible to their constituents, and both can be packed with the mayor's handpicked cronies that share his view. The mayor wants the dollars from the federal gasoline tax, but he doesn't want legislators, who are elected by the public, to share in the power of deciding how those dollars are spent.

An example of a project based on politics rather than a need is the extension of the Coastal Trail. The Coastal Trail is a waste, not a need, it is not transportation and doesn't get one child to school or one person to work.

Deanna Easett
Anchorage

Not getting money's worth

I am sorry to see that the "conservative" remnant of the Times has not chosen to focus enough attention on the issue of the road designs being implemented in Anchorage to understand the frustration of citizens and legislators such as Ben Stevens. It is a complex issue and you have failed to address it responsibly. It is not enough that we get jobs and economic stimulus from spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year on



TM 57

roads in Anchorage. We should be getting our money's worth and we are not. If the Daily News can understand the microscopic aspects of over-design on Strawberry Road, why won't the Times take the time to understand the macroscopic aspects of over-design on our economy and lead the charge? We need more roads, not more pavement. The history of AMATS should convince you that the two things are not the same.

Frank McQuarry
Anchorage

Fifteen minutes of fame

The March 21 Voice of the Times editorial was part intelligent debate on an old issue about my personal beliefs. Through five voted many times to promote responsible oil and gas development and provide tax relief to encourage development of marginal oil fields, a couple of sweeping sentences in this editorial suggested I oppose these things.

The editorial suggested that folks like me, who feel we should narrow certain oil tax exemptions, "would like" to see oil investment leave Alaska. Former Gov. Wally Hickel and Jay Hammond have also stood to say current oil tax exemptions need to be re-visted. Two of my bill co-sponsors began their careers working on the North Slope. I'd suggest that maybe we've all questioned the current tax system because it effectively exempts 150,000 barrels a day from Alaska's 15 percent production tax. Current law grants those exemptions to

matter how profitable the fields are and regardless of whether oil is at \$20 per barrel, \$35 per barrel, or even \$100 per barrel. That's just bad policy.

As for my views on development, in my 14 months in the Legislature, I've voted for bills to expand oil and gas exploration into Southwest Alaska (SB 280), promote investment in an Alaska gas pipeline (HB 16 and HB 287), reduce taxes to promote development of otherwise uneconomic oil fields (HB 28), and create conditions to encourage oil and gas exploration (HB 61 and HB 246).

Between your editorial and this letter, my 15 minutes of fame should be about finished. One can only hope.

Rep. Les Gara
Anchorage

More than new roads

It's great that our congressional delegation is bringing home federal dollars for Alaskans, but I sometimes question their judgment of what our state really needs. The latest example was highlighted in a Voice of the Times editorial.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski voted in \$190 million for the Denali Commission to build roads in the Bush, an achievement that will lower the cost of living for Alaska's poorest residents.

This is wonderful until one stops and thinks about the roads we already have but cannot afford to maintain. In recent years, roads throughout the state have ended up closed during winter when the state cannot pay for plowing, and at least one highway was not maintained during the summer last year due to lack of funding.

I applaud the senator's motives, but building a road to Kotzebue will not lower the cost of milk there if that road is impossible half the year. Certainly we can improve access to rural communities, but rural Alaskans know that transportation means much more than just roads. It means high-tech navigational aids for Bush planes, frequent ferry services for southern coastal communities, and creative thinking about how best to meet the needs of Alaskan citizens.

Stacy Cooper
Anchorage

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Friday, April 23, 2004 **B-9**

GREENS BLOCK CONSTRUCTION ON ...

Pogo mine

SCORE ANOTHER temporary victory for environmentalists in their never-ending struggle to drive job-producing industries out of Alaska.

The Northern Alaska Environmental Center managed to block construction work at the Pogo gold mine near Delta Junction by appealing the mine's federal wastewater permit.

Most of the 300 or so employees already working on the mine's support system already have been laid off by Teck-Pogo Inc., the operator, had planned on a work force of up to 500 people this summer, most from the Fairbanks area. A mine official said the delay caused by the Environmental Center's appeal may be a year or more.

The appeal was based on a claim that the mine's discharge might contain arsenic and other heavy metals. But Teck-Pogo plans called for collecting and treating all wastewater in a treatment plant rated to produce drinking-quality water.

The Environmental Center claimed it was innocent and being made a scapegoat. "We're just asking the company to abide by the Clean Water Act," said Mara Bascujaly, spokeswoman for the green group.

BUT BELIEF in the group's innocence was not shared by Teck-Pogo — not surprisingly — nor by state officials. "It's very distressing," said Ed Fogels of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

"The state had a huge interest in this," Fogel said. "We've been working with the company and with interest groups, including the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, and we felt this was a project where all the issues were bundled up and everyone was happy. This has no environmental merit whatsoever," he added.

The Environmental Center claimed that the company did not need to stop work while the appeal was pending. "That's politically expedient to have a scapegoat," Bascujaly said. While the greens are skilled at stopping progress, they seem to know little about the economics of large projects, though perhaps they know and don't care.

Remarks by Karl Hanneman, Alaska regional director for Teck-Pogo Inc., indicated the group's comments were dangerous. He said the company cannot build a mine without knowing whether the design will have to be changed or if the permit will be denied in the end. "We cannot build a project without knowing what kind of project we're going to build." The Pogo Mine is a \$250 million project. It has an estimated reserve of 5.5 million ounces of gold and is considered a world-class prospect.

The sneak attack by the Environmental Center stirred up a hornet's nest and brought denunciations by both Republican and Democratic politicians. Most called on the group to drop its opposition, though so far that has not been forthcoming.

Score one for the greens. Hopefully they will lose in the end. In the meantime, many Alaskans will not have jobs.

Settling scores is ugly side of politics

By PAULETTE SIMPSON

The use of a typed-up ethics investigation to destroy a political opponent is hardly new. With the support of an accommodating press, it usually works.

In Alaska, there isn't a better target for media and partisan hate than Republican Party Chairman Randy Ruedrich. He works far free on behalf of Republicans and he is very smart.

The investigation of our chairman's activities while serving on the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission has been sensationalized by nonprofit media and Democrat sniping. At least 15 news stories and damning editorials have broadcast our chairman's alleged "conflict of interest."

He was accused of "sending hundreds of e-mails from a state computer," "fundraising," and "soliciting funds from the industries he regulated on the AOGCC." Turns out, there weren't "hundreds" of e-mails. There were a handful and none related to fundraising on behalf of the Republican Party.

After nearly five months of scrutiny by Knowles attorneys still employed by this administration, the state's official

Fortunately, when presented with all the facts, Alaskans are smart enough to see through the nastiest of partisan political maneuvers.

ethics complaint unearthed 25 possible infractions. The single legitimate ethics mistake — forwarding a confidential document — Ruedrich admits was an error but says was unintentional.

"Conflict of interest" suggests personal gain. Where was the personal gain for Randy Ruedrich in any of this? As a professional engineer, he gave up far more money to take a position of service with government. While on the job, he put in many hours over and above the work week moving oil and gas projects along. This matter is not about good govern-



THE ONLY PERSON NOT ASKED TO APOLOGIZE FOR SEPT. 11

ment. It's about character assassination and settling a political score. All politics is personal. Remember: reapportionment?

Under Tony Knowles, the Democrats controlled the process and should have controlled the outcome — an outcome critical to the continued existence of Alaska Democrats. With shrinking Democrat voter registration, ever-increasing Republican registration and the near certainty of a Republican governor in 2002, redrawing election districts to favor Democrat legislative candidates was essential to survival.

For nearly two years, Ruedrich dogged the reapportionment process. Because he believed the Knowles plan was unconstitutional and should be challenged, our chairman personally signed the fee agreement to initiate litigation.

The Alaska Supreme Court tossed out the gerrymandered Democrat ruse and the final result yielded only an additional two Democrat Senate seats — hardly the legislative takeover anticipated by the Democrats.

Stung by their embarrassing re-electing defeat and the November 2002

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